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THE NEW

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The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

"HEROIC little Servia" provided the occasion for the last war; if the semi-official Austrian *Reichspost* is to be trusted the magnified Jugoslavia of to-day is likely to be responsible for the next. The charges are that Jugoslavia has a military understanding with Germany as a secret codicil of their recent commercial treaty and that it involves the surrender of Austrian territory to Jugoslavia; that the Jugoslavs were ready to aid Germany on the occasion of the putsch which resulted in Dollfuss's murder, and that they have been receiving Nazi refugees ever since, and permitting them to prepare a new putsch, which is planned to take place before Papen takes up his official duties in Vienna. We may not believe the whole of this story. But the pro-Nazi mentality of the Jugoslav Government is not in dispute, and the Jugoslav hatred of Italy and in particular of seeing Austria an Italian colony is such that no extremity of folly is impossible for her. With this in mind Mussolini's "war not to-morrow, but to-day" speech becomes wholly intelligible. It was not one of his usual bombastic utterances, designed to keep up the morale of his virile Fascists. It was a direct warning to Germany to keep out of Austria and to Jugoslavia not to act as an accomplice. The only safeguard we have at the moment is that Germany is not yet ready and that none of these dictators feels comfortable about putting arms into the hands of its proletariat.

The Struggle in the Saar

In view of his frequently broken promises not to embroil Austria, the scepticism of French opinion about Hitler's overtures in his Saar speech is not surprising. The immense crowd, the flags and the cheering were a triumph of Nazi propaganda and organisation, and only a few months ago we should have regarded them as foreshadowing a certain Nazi victory in the coming plebiscite. Since the slaughter of June 30th and the murder of Dollfuss the issue has become doubtful. While Hitler was speaking at Ehrenbreitstein Herr Braun, the Socialist leader, was speaking side by side with a Communist and a Catholic priest to an equally determined anti-Nazi meeting of 66,000 people. Faced by a common enemy, and no doubt now still more encouraged by Hitler's comparison of all who vote anti-Nazi with Judas Iscariot, "the united front" in the Saar is firm and real. According to a well-informed estimate something like 40 per cent. of the Saar votes will, in any case, be for return to Germany, and a similar percentage equally certainly for continued independence. The remaining votes, as a result of recent disillusion with Hitlerism, are now considered doubtful. The issue probably lies in the hands of the Pope, who may still make a decisive statement which will encourage Catholic voters to risk their skins by voting against absorption into the Totalitarian State.

The German Prison

When Hitler makes a promise, who in Germany decides whether it shall be carried out? In preparation for the plebiscite Hitler promised an amnesty for political prisoners. Recent official statements have suggested that 15,000 sufferers in concentration camps and prisons are to be released. Whether these are to include the thousand odd Storm Troopers shut up because they were suspected of complicity in the Röhm "plot" no one knows. In any case none has as yet been freed. The decisive word is said to rest with Göring—or, more probably, with the more obscure heads of the secret police. Definite promises have been made, but not yet fulfilled, in regard to two well-known political prisoners, Dr. Theodor Neubauer and Ernst Reuter, on whose behalf a deputation representing the Society of Friends and a number of distinguished Oxford and Cambridge professors has intervened in Berlin. Dr. Neubauer was a Communist deputy whose character commanded respect among people of all opinions. After a year in a concentration camp, much alarm is felt for his health, which was undermined by poison gas in the war. Ernst Reuter was the well-known Socialist Mayor of Magdeburg.

* * *

And what of all the other thousands of political prisoners against whom the Nazis have not even alleged any crime but that of disliking Nazi methods and objects? Many of them have been in prison ever since February, 1933. And their number grows, a recent recruit being imprisoned for "disparaging" the German Government. The People's Courts, the latest engine of arbitrary authority, are now in full swing. A number of Socialists, who were once pacifist and constitutionalist in attitude, have been condemned to long terms of imprisonment. The best known is Rudolf Küstermeier, a University economist of more than German reputation. He was accused of illegal Socialist activities and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. There is no change in Nazidom. It cannot stand the light within Germany or without. Visitors do not penetrate the concentration camps and the issue of the *Times* of August 25th was confiscated in Germany because it contained an article about these camps. The latest Nazi encouragement to foreign visitors is the enforced departure from Germany of Mrs. Sinclair Lewis, who is the first American journalist actually to be expelled from Germany. Mrs. Lewis once wrote an article which suggested that she had a poor opinion of Hitler. No doubt she was suspected, probably correctly, of being likely to write another saying the same thing. Presumably the Nazi authorities think that expulsion will persuade her to change her mind.

Schacht Contra Mundum

Dr. Schacht's speech at the opening of the Leipzig Fair was a defiant blend of scorn and bluster. When he speaks of the past crimes and blunders of the Allies and the other creditor Powers over Reparations and loans raised to pay Reparations, he commands assent. He rightly regards the creditors as far more to blame than the debtor for the economic calamities which have followed upon these monstrosities of international finance. But when he goes on to protest Germany's determination to shut out imports, and to manufacture goods and install plant at home regardless of costs and difficulties, he is only laying up further troubles for the future. For this means replacing one top-heavy economic structure which has already broken down by another which can be kept from breakdown only by permanently lowering the German standard of life, and keeping up permanently a high protective wall round the misshapen structure of autarchic Germany. Germany's economic difficulties are very great; and it is easy to understand Dr. Schacht's determination to bluster as a sound of defiance to the outside world. If he really means what he says it is a poor outlook for us all; for a permanently depressed Germany is hardly consistent with a prosperous Europe. But the dominating question is how long Hitler's Germany can survive at all.

The N.R.A. Under Revision

The chief business now on hand in the United States is the impending reorganisation of the N.R.A. This has now been deferred till next week, and rumour is busy with accounts of differences of view between General Johnson and President Roosevelt's other advisers. It is generally expected that General Johnson will be superseded as "dictator" of American industry by some sort of representative Board, on which Labour may have a seat, but that General Johnson will remain as chairman of this body. It seems also to be expected that the price-fixing part of the industrial codes will be modified, or given up, but that the labour sections will remain in force. Mr. Roosevelt is also busy working out his plans for a general scheme of insurance, or maintenance, for the unemployed; and an elaborate study has been made of all the systems now in force in Europe. It is said, however, that the American scheme will not follow the familiar European lines, but will aim to a much greater extent at the provision of work rather than mere relief. Rumour has again been busy with the dollar, prophesying further deliberate depreciation; but there has been an official denial of this, and it would indeed be very surprising if the Government did depreciate further with big refunding operations immediately ahead. The threat of a big textile strike still remains in being; but efforts are being made on the President's behalf to promote a settlement. The underlying issue of effective Trade Union recognition is, however, apparently no nearer solution in face of the employers' determination to maintain the "open shop."

The Tolpuddle Martyrs

The celebrations at Dorchester have begun this week with a round of Summer Schools under the auspices of the Trades Union Congress, the International Federation of Trade Unions, and the National Council of Labour Colleges. These preliminary gatherings will lead up to the Trades Union Congress next week, with its special meetings at Tolpuddle and Dorchester for workers' sports, for dedicating the memorial cottages presented by the Congress, and so on. The agricultural labourers who were transported a hundred years ago for forming in Tolpuddle a branch of Robert Owen's Grand National Consolidated Trades Union have always been far better remembered in British Trade Union circles than countless other martyrs of the formation period of British working-class organisation; and these ardent Wesleyan social reformers get a place in British history which is appropriate,

even if it exaggerates their personal importance. They suffered for their convictions; but many others whose names are now forgotten except by scholars poking in dusty archives suffered no less in much the same cause. All honour to the Dorchester labourers; but let it not be forgotten that the celebrations this week and next are really held not on their behalf alone, but for all those "unknown soldiers" who suffered to achieve that freedom to organise and to speak freely which has never been so much in danger since their time as to-day.

Lancashire v. Australia

The Australian Government has made a small concession in its dispute with Lancashire over the new cotton duties. Goods which were ordered on or before August 1st and arrive in Australia on or before November 15th will not be charged with the new duties. This will mitigate the hardship caused by cancellation of orders due to the announcement of the tariff, but it will not be enough, or anything like it, to appease Lancashire. The cotton interests claim, of course, that the new tariff is a contravention of the Ottawa Agreement; the Australians retort that it is not, and that any way Mr. Walter Elliot has already broken the spirit of Ottawa beyond repair—which is a singularly awkward argument. Meanwhile good feeling has not been helped by Mr. Bruce's action in forwarding the memorandum of the Lancashire deputation to his Government by post—though he has since repaired the blunder, and cabled a full summary—or by the movement by grocers in Lancashire and Yorkshire to boycott Australian produce. We cannot think that the boycott idea is sensible or that it will lead to anything but a complication of the issue. On the other hand Mr. Lyon's statement that the Australian Government can do nothing without Parliament's consent and that any action must therefore be deferred until after the coming elections is declared by the *Manchester Guardian* to be an inaccurate interpretation of the position, there being a perfectly good precedent for the Executive acting first and obtaining Parliamentary ratification later. The whole dispute shows up pretty clearly the muddle and unwisdom of Ottawa.

Australia v. England

It remains doubtful, all the same, whether Australia *v.* Lancashire contains such potent seeds of acrimony as Australia *v.* England. The recent series of Test Matches have passed off without open warfare, despite every effort by the press to induce an outbreak of hostilities. But the peace was kept only at the price of complete surrender by the M.C.C.—acting in contact with Downing Street—to Australian susceptibilities. So Australia gets the Ashes and Imperial relations are kept sweet. In view of the political importance nowadays attached by Governments to ascendancy in sport, the English authorities were faced with an uncomfortable choice. They had to decide between the chances of angering Australian opinion by winning with leg-theory and of lowering Australian regard for English prowess by losing without it. They chose a sacrifice of cricket prestige as the lesser evil and endeavoured to make up for it by regaling the Australians with an air display designed to restore prestige in other directions.

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CLASS WAR IN IRELAND

ENGLAND is not without responsibility for the recent rioting in Cork. It was Free State rifles that these young farmers challenged, and the arrears of the land annuities which they owed would have gone into Mr. De Valera's exchequer. None the less, the crisis that has driven them to desperation is the joint achievement of their President and Mr. Thomas. If the former made it deliberately, knowing what he meant to do, the latter played into his hands by clumsy rhetoric and the big stick of the Imperial bully. If any persuasion could induce Mr. Thomas, or one of his more intelligent colleagues, to reopen conversations for a settlement of this dispute, his countrymen would have lighter hearts and Ireland would face a happier future. Tentative approaches, we gather, have been made without result: they may possibly be renewed at Geneva, where Mr. De Valera will head the Free State delegation. Two contrary suggestions have been made. Those who believe that the quarrel is mainly political appeal to the British Government to say plainly what everyone knows to be implicit in the relationship of the Dominions to the mother country—that they have the right of secession. It is possible that even this Government might be willing to make this declaration, if it were sure that an independent Ireland would agree to arrangements that would meet its military anxieties, and again, if it were easy about the bearing of such a declaration on India. Actually, to assure Indians that they will in the early future enjoy this right is probably the best, and indeed the only, way of winning their confidence. But the Government fears its die-hards, and will walk warily. This suggested line of approach is for these reasons difficult. More realistic persons have accordingly proposed that any conversations should be confined to the economic issue. A British Government which has defaulted on its own debt to America could hardly play the merciless creditor to Ireland. After the drop in agricultural prices there is a case, apart altogether from the legal and political dispute, for a substantial reduction of the land annuities. Would that meet Mr. De Valera's views, if at the same time the English market were reopened to Irish produce, with all the benefits of Ottawa?

It is a natural question to ask, but for a variety of curious and interesting reasons we incline to doubt whether he would smile on this arrangement. In the first place, after asserting, with some respectable legal opinions to back him, that Ireland is not liable for these annuities at all, it would not be easy for him to withdraw from this position. Again, he is standing out for arbitration by a board at least one member of which need not be a subject of King George. That is an intelligible and indeed, in principle, a proper demand. To grant it would mean a surrender of one of the high prerogatives of national sovereignty, and this to our thinking would be a great gain to the cause of international unity. The superstition of sovereignty ranks high among the obstacles to world peace. But even if one can imagine the National Government yielding over this issue (and we cannot), Mr. De Valera faces a complicated position at home. He knows, or he thinks he knows, how to control it, while he leads the Left in a heroic national struggle. But he may not feel sure that he could govern the Free State

so easily, if land values and farmers' incomes were rising, while his critics and opponents who stand still further to the Left accused him of weakness in face of the traditional foe. He made a quasi-revolutionary situation, and he may have to maintain it.

The fundamental fact in Southern Ireland, as we see it, is the economic unrest that has grown, year by year *crescendo*, since emigration to the United States was drastically restricted. Because some years ago Americans were bitten with the Nordic superstition, Irishmen are shooting each other in Cork. The war first checked the human tide that used to flow from one shore of the Atlantic to the other, then the quota, and finally the slump. The result is that the surplus population of nearly twenty years is dammed up in the already congested districts of the West. Some part of it escapes to Liverpool or Glasgow; some of it tramps the streets of Dublin unemployed; but most of it remains in the derelict villages of the poorer counties, hopeless, angry and militant. For the young men there is neither land nor work, and for the young women small prospect of a home. These are the conditions that everywhere make a revolutionary mood. These young peasants are Catholics: if they have ever heard of Marx they regard him as anti-Christ. None the less they are landless proletarians; they are ranged in furious opposition to property; they are waging with full consciousness an agrarian class war. The real cleavage in Ireland is between the poorer peasants, their landless sons and the labourers in one camp, and the bigger farmers with the mercantile and professional classes in the other. Urban labour, not directly interested in the land, stood aloof, but it had to ally itself, more or less, with the village proletariat. Mr. De Valera's victory over Mr. Cosgrave was at bottom the first upheaval of this sunken peasant mass against the propertied middle class.

Since this happened the class struggle has become more open and pronounced. The middle class turns Fascist, puts on the blue shirt and follows General Duffy. The younger and more militant peasants, who used to drill in the ranks of the Irish Republican Army, have now broken away, and formed the "Republican Congress." It also arms and drills; it hopes to enlist the urban workers as well as the villagers; it is active in the industrial North as well as in the Free State, and its objective is an all-Ireland social revolution. Though some call it "Communist," we imagine that its spiritual father is rather James Connolly than Lenin or Marx. Though anti-clerical feeling exists, it does not yet play an important part. The political issue is receding before the social issue: armed proletarians face armed Fascists. None the less, the eternal political issue still operates, chiefly because Ireland is divided. While the South has a mildly "Left" peasants' government, the North has its die-hard capitalist administration with the Imperial power behind it.

If one disregards the ideology, partly nationalist, partly republican, of this class struggle, it turns on the eternal Irish issue—the land. How much doctrine matters to these inflammable, imaginative peasants we do not know. What they certainly want is land, several acres of it, with a cottage. They want it free of rents or annuities, and they know that they can get it only by breaking up the larger farms, above all, the cattle ranches. Mr. De Valera, of set design, and Mr. Thomas, unconscious of what he did, have conspired to aid them. The loss of the English market has sent down the value of land and the farmers' incomes with a catastrophic plunge. These unlucky men can pay neither their rates nor their annuities (though these have been halved). Even if the redistribution of the land were to follow the legal and regular course, the amount of compensation that would be paid at any compulsory sub-division of a large farm would not be considerable. The Blueshirts arm to defend their property; the Republican Congress to seize it. Between them, with a small democratic majority and his armed regulars behind him, stands Mr. De Valera. It seems odd to call him a moderate, but such, in this class war, he is. He will describe himself as a "Christian Communist"; he has no objection of principle to property; he is a loyal son of the Church. But he, too, aims, though without violence, at satisfying the landless peasantry. He, too, wants to abolish the ranches. He sets to work with wheat subsidies to do it. He tries with tariffs to create new industries that will absorb some of the restless village youth. He is ready for some compulsory sub-division of the larger farms, and presumably he foresaw that his quarrel with Mr. Thomas would lower their value. He is serving the ends and interests of the small peasants, while all the while he repudiates the class warfare of the two extremes, and exalts the ideal of a united and self-sufficient nation.

It is hard to see the end of this situation that history and contemporary economics have made between them. America with idle acres, stored wheat and surplus cotton, will not call in empty stomachs and naked backs to help her to dispose of her plenty. On the contrary, she will rather stiffen her emigration restrictions than relax them. If Mr. De Valera in his dwarf unit finds self-sufficiency an inspiring ideal, his folly is neither original nor singular. He can plead that he is adapting himself to inexorable circumstances. But the poverty that has resulted may have its natural issue in strife sharper and perhaps more murderous than that of to-day. If any wish of ours could influence Downing Street we would plead for the exploration of any road, be it political or economic, that might lead to a settlement.

THE INDIAN PRINCE

To the progressive Englishman who no longer wishes to dominate India, the Indian Rajah seems an anachronism. He is apt to imagine him a petty tyrant, wielding almost unlimited powers within his own territory. To the British Government the Princes are a very useful institution, to be preserved as a camouflage for British authority in districts where it might otherwise not run effectively. The situation as it appears to an Indian Prince himself is seldom stated or understood in this country.

First consider the contrast between the nominal and the actual relation between the Prince and the Crown. In the Proclamation of 1858 the Sovereign of Great Britain declared:

> We shall respect the rights, dignity and honour of Native Princes as Our own; and We desire that they, as well as Our own subjects, should enjoy that prosperity and that social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government.

In practice the rights and dignity of these reigning Houses have been abrogated wherever the British Government thought fit. The reasons may sometimes have been good and sometimes bad: in any case there has been no respect for the rights of the Indian Prince. Instances of the arrest, imprisonment,

and deposition of Indian Princes by the British Government could be quoted to the length of several pages. It is truly said that the word of a white man to a white man may be his bond, but the word of a white man to a coloured man is—well—scarcely so binding.

To the average Englishman the word "Rajah" probably suggests a number of things varying from the romantic luxury which stirs the society papers into ecstasy to indecent adventure in the back streets of university towns. Let me outline a type of experience which is the common lot of most Indian Princes. First, his education—an education, nominally, for the exercise of sovereign authority.

If there is anything more calculated to unfit a man for rule than the environment in which the average Indian Prince receives his education, it is the substance of that education itself. In the handful of large, powerful States, of course, the parents of the future ruler have a certain say in his upbringing, but in nearly all weaker States, and in most States under minority rule, the Government ordains directly, or indirectly, where the heir shall receive his education. After a procedure which rather resembles that of some latter-day press-gang, the future ruler finds himself in one of the "Chiefs' Colleges" which the Government has established in India. The age of the students varies from about seven years to the age at which they may ascend their thrones. In these Colleges the absurdities, the grotesque, laughable absurdities of Imperialism, are to be found as perhaps nowhere else. The standard and character of the instruction received might seem to be designed to create in the pupil that solid imperviousness to the things of the mind that has become the characteristic glory of the English Public School. Young men who sometimes went direct from the College to the throne were (I speak of my own experience) not given even the most elementary grounding in economics, in political organisation, or in the essentials of beneficent administration. It is true that our Chiron taught us a little history as the spirit moved him, but the Government of India is not fond of history. In less orthodox studies, however, the Government showed decided originality. In our College we had to keep a daily diary for which marks were awarded. As the entries were read aloud by the instructor, it may well be imagined what a scope was offered for that peculiarly flowery flattery that is one of the most deplorable attributes of the Eastern mentality (almost as deplorable as the willingness of the Western mentality to be pleased by it). Not unnaturally, the diary was a popular institution with the masters of the College. But it was never forgotten that there are Alexanders as well as Solomons, and the disciplinary function of education was enforced with zeal and determination.

Military drill was compulsory for all. Next in importance came membership of the Scout troop, which was voluntary (*cf.* any English O.T.C.). Some politicians have a very vivid way of personifying the glories of the Empire, but the spectacle of a number of Indian boys of all ages, desperately awkward and unhappy in their Scout regalia, dancing round an elderly Civil Servant, chanting the elevating refrain:

> "Welcome here, sir, blank, blank, Chief Scout,
> Welcome here Chief Scout, blank, blank,"

—is a sight that has to be seen to be believed, and one, I am sure, destined to immortality in Clio's Jest-book.

This education sets the tenor of the Indian ruler's life, and epitomises it. The political life of a ruling Prince is a sort of perpetual Scout meeting. Even if he survives his education, he is constantly thwarted in his endeavour to reform or develop his State, while every inducement is offered him to lead the old, useless existence of the Palace, as so many, alas, of his ancestors have led before him. At every step he encounters the Government's monopoly (the political monopoly has already been touched upon)—a monopoly extending over a huge field, from salt and opium to all forms of communication, notably civil aviation. The Political Officer is his Scoutmaster, (There are also in some States British officials—needless to say this is a privileged position.) The Prince is never allowed to forget his impotence, his dependence. A relation of mine was forced to alter his private notepaper because his ancient heraldic insignia happened to contain a crown. No one may speak of his "dynasty"—only of his "family." The generic term "royalty" is denied to the Indian Rajah—although radically it is derived from the Sanscrit "Rajan" through the Latin Rex, whereby all European royalty expresses itself even to-day. A Prince is not allowed to reign according to the modern re-edition of our political dictionary. If a ruler or a Prince desires to travel he has to apply for a Government Passport (eligible for "British Empire and all countries of Europe excluding Soviet Russia"), and if the issuer thereof is in a spiteful temper, he may well find himself described as "Mr. ——, British subject." If the native ruler has in his employ any British or Eurasian person, that person has official precedence before all Indian officials in the State, however high their rank. Certainly his education fits the Indian Prince for the experience of sovereignty.

The position of the Native States is one of the most fundamental considerations of India's future; it is this fact that turns all the Boy Scout comedy of the ruler's life into gigantic tragedy. Yet nothing is done. Even in the White Paper the dead hand of the Company still rules the Native States. The case of the Indian Prince-hood to-day is simple: like the English House of Lords (although the two are scarcely comparable), we desire either to be abolished or to be made an effective reality. Our education and our experience of rule are an insult to ourselves and the martyrdom of our subjects. "The examples of Princes, to those that see them, are, and ever have been, more potent to form their actions than the Lawes themselves." I recommend that precept of Hobbes to the Government of India. But perhaps the Government has known it a long time.

A HUMBLE MEMBER OF A FALLEN ORDER

A LONDON DIARY

THOUGH theatre time was not finished the West End was wonderfully and deliciously quiet when the silence order came into force on Monday night. I have been wondering whether there is any real reason why we should not forbid hooters in the day as well as in the night, and I have recently been trying out the effect on myself of not using it in the day. The result is a marked increase of caution. Every cross-road presents the driver with a moral problem. Slow he must, unless he is a maniac, even at small cross-roads; but if he uses his horn and gets no response from another car he is apt to feel justified in going straight across. If he must not use his horn he has no alternative to dropping right down to "dead slow." The occasions on which one is compelled to blow one's horn in the interests of safety are, I find, very rare. But they exist. It is sometimes desirable to tell another car that one wants to pass. And there are emergencies. Personally I shall risk a hoot when a pedestrian suddenly steps off the pavement in front of my car, even if it is after half-past eleven and within five miles of Charing Cross. A policeman I asked told me he had no instructions about emergency hoots, but that he would certainly not take a severe view of them! In any case I hope to be forgiven, because my horn is a decorous and reasonable affair—loud enough to alarm the pedestrian, but not loud enough to waken the neighbourhood.

* * *

The Minister of Transport got into trouble the other day for blaming cyclists for pushing motorists into the middle of the road. If he was thinking of the narrow and beautiful road which runs through the forest to Epping, I can well understand his remark. This is peculiarly a cyclists' road: they ride there at the week-ends in thousands, three, four, five and six abreast and leave even the most cautious motorist no alternative but to drive in the middle of the road and even at times on the wrong side. What is the remedy? Shoot the motorist? Stricter regulations about cycling abreast?

Pull down a chunk of the forest for a great new arterial road? None of these. What is wanted is the Continental, and not really very difficult, device of making a separate parallel track—in this case right off the road—to be used exclusively by cyclists, or perhaps by horse traffic and cyclists. And while we are making new roads why should we not provide hikers with peace and safety by always giving them a footpath *the other side of the hedge?* If we further absolutely stopped all house building along new roads and insisted on planning groups of houses or villages with their own approaches off the main road we should serve everyone's interest. Beauty would not be ruined. Residents would have a quiet community life instead of a ribbon dormitory in which only the toughest can sleep, pedestrians and cyclists would go their way without fear of the death behind them, and the motorist would be able to proceed at a sensible speed without knowing that he may at any moment slaughter an absent-minded hiker, a child running out from one of the new houses or a cyclist swerving unexpectedly in his path. Why not? The answer, I suppose, is something about site values which, in this age, are placed higher than the value of life or beauty.

* * *

I have been reading "Callisthenes" with renewed interest, not the Greek philosopher at the Court of Alexander who was exposed to wild beasts for refusing to treat his employer as a god, but a writer who I am glad to say is in no such danger, the author of those mellifluous essays reflecting "the policies, principles and opinions of the House of Selfridge." Last week he made a sudden assault on the ideal of economic equality, based on the usual assumption that by some Law of Nature inequality of ability must always and forever be measured by inequality of income. And on Monday he attacked Mr. Roosevelt's New Deal. One of its results, it seems, is that Marshall Field and Co., the great Chicago store, has for the first time made a loss instead of a profit. For it has had to pay not only larger taxes, but a higher wage-bill. Since the minimum wages imposed by the N.R.A. are not enormous, it seems possible that low pay has been partly responsible for the prodigious fortune accumulated in the past by the Marshall Fields. Callisthenes records these facts, he explains, not in order to interfere in the affairs of another country, but "because we believe that the truth should be known about the effects of governmental interference in business." It is interesting that Selfridge's should consider it desirable to issue this warning now, when the prospects of effective governmental interference with their business seem to me regrettably remote. But perhaps I am wrong in supposing that the object of this advertisement is to influence the political opinions of the public. Perhaps it is merely intended to attract customers who share these views. And we may hope to see some rival shopkeeper advertising the opposite opinions in order to attract those who believe in "interference." In the meanwhile, it would be interesting to know if Callisthenes's incursion into politics has gained many new customers for Selfridge's. It has certainly lost one old one.

* * *

If you want to compile a book that is both ludicrously funny and terribly tragic, all that you have to do to-day is to print extracts from the everyday utterances of Nazi leaders and leader writers. Two books of this kind have just been published. The first is called *Heil Hitler* (Christophers, 2*s*. 6*d*). It is most amusingly illustrated, and it specialises in statements which are contradictory, funny and idiotic. Some of them have already appeared in this paper—notably the ones in which Goebbels declared that "Christ could not have been a Jew. Scientific proof is not necessary: it is so," and the almost incredible statements about the Nordic race, their unique capacities for speech and the "kiss capability" of their mouths. What about this for logic?

> There still exist good-natured Germans who have not yet woken from their sleep and still say: "Yes, but there are some decent Jews, too." If every Nazi knew even one decent Jew, then, as there are 12,000,000 Nazis, there would be 12,000,000 decent Jews in Germany. But here we see how illogical these wiseacres are, for there are at most 600,000 Jews in Germany.

Sweetest of all is the advertisement:

> My leader wishes me to marry. I therefore seek a Protestant, pure-Aryan girl, blonde, slim and possessed of private means.

Finally—to quote one more out of a feast of good things:

> This "Lord" [Beaverbrook] calls himself a "Canadian," but in the Foreign Press Handbook it is stated that he is a Hungarian Jew called Ralph D. Blumenfeld.

The second and larger book, *Fascist Germany Explains*, by Celia Strachey and John Gustav Werner (Gollancz, 1*s*.), is politically much more important. For the extracts are chosen, not because they are ludicrous and idiotic—though there are many of these—but because they illustrate the contradictions of Nazi policy, the promises of peace side by side with the more insistent promises of war and the promises to control the banks and industry side by side with the insistence that private enterprise must not be touched. In the first book we see Germany in the hands of neurotics and idiots: in the second we see, in addition to neurosis and idiocy, the full and deliberate outcome of Hitler's remark in the earlier editions of *Mein Kampf* (deleted in all editions since 1932):

> The German has not the slightest notion how a people must be misled if the adherence of the masses is sought.

* * *

Recently I spent some days sauntering about the Welsh country-side in a car. On one occasion I was flagged by a tramp. I gave him a lift and asked him what he was doing for a living. He showed me a cigarette box full of packets of lavender. The economics of lavender selling were interesting. He bought a quantity of lavender and fifty envelopes and mixed the lavender with some other scent. His outlay for fifty packets mixed ready for selling was about 10*d*.—which, if he only got a penny a packet, showed a handsome profit, though perhaps a meagre living. Often, though, he would be given much more than a penny a packet. He was a very happy man. He had found routine intolerable after the war and had never regretted taking to the road and the casual ward. He spent odd hours doing crossword puzzles, and thought he had missed a fortune because he had not sent in a correct solution which he had reached, to the *Daily Mail*. I was able to comfort him by explaining that not all solvers won prizes. The passion of his life was football, and he directed his wanderings largely by the football fixtures. He boasted that he had seen most of the great English teams at one time or another playing in Wales. He had a bitter experience this year when he wanted to come up to London to see a Cup-tie. Everything depended on his selling enough lavender one afternoon to enable him to take the excursion train. He was unlucky in his beat and took nothing. Next morning, by a tragic irony, he took 10*s*. 6*d*. in a couple of hours. But it was too late for the Cup-tie.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Miss M. A. Anderson.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

> They should look upon the local pack of hounds as something in which they had a partnership, which was beyond price. When they saw hounds coming to them, they should not look upon them as a collection of dogs, but remember that each one had a character just like their own, and in many cases a great deal better, because fox-hounds were the bravest and noblest and kindest things the Almighty had ever put into the world, and they very soon would find that out if they came into daily contact with them. Not only was Col. Borwick a Commandant of a Cavalry School and a distinguished soldier, but he also was a Master of Hounds, and when she said that, she did not think she could say more—it was a good passport to heaven. (Applause)—*Chester Observer.*

At an evening party given by the Princess of San Faustino one of the guests, who looked lovely with pale green hair, said she had shampooed her grey locks with spinach water.—*Daily Sketch.*

Flogged baby: exclusive picture.—*Daily Mirror* Contents Bill.

No-one in England will be peevish at the passing of the Ashes. We have been beaten by a much better team. Oddly enough, and to the permanent bewilderment of foreigners, that is an experience in which Englishmen still find a keen enjoyment.—Leader in the *Evening News*.

Gaskell (Mrs.). Wives and Daughter, bit loose.—*Bookseller's Catalogue*.

Before she was born in Hampstead twenty-one years ago, her parents had talked with comedians so that their child should have a sense of humour.—*Daily Express* on "The First Eugenic Baby."

No self-respecting dog can face this weather in London! He must come to Bellmead Kennels, Haslemere, Surrey, and get a real rest, and take the cure after a strenuous London Season!—Advt. in *Times*.

If Russia does get in, then Geneva will without doubt be transformed into one of the most sinister and dangerous centres in the world. Behind the cloak of idealism, and all that worthy decency which is supposed to go with the League, we shall have international plotting of purely gangster morality.—*Sunday Pictorial*.

A moralist might look unkindly on this film, which is saved, however, from an unmoral bias by the suicide of the lovely woman about whom the story pirouettes.—*Western Independent*.

SWEETS

Fifty million pounds are spent every year in Great Britain on chocolates and confectionery. So it is announced in a paragraph relating to the Chocolate and Confectionery Exhibition now being held at Olympia. Statistics are often depressing nowadays, but the figures I have quoted give us grounds for believing that the world is in some important respects a better place to-day than it has ever been before. What child of any age, since Moses lay in the ark of bulrushes, would not wish to have been born into a world containing such mountains of edible happiness? The city child has been robbed of much—of the country spectacle with its lavish variety of flowers and animals—but in compensation he has been given sweets such as his country predecessors never knew. He has lost Wordsworthian delights, but has been given in exchange the riches of the sweet-shop window.

I do not know enough social history to be able to say when the democratisation of sweets began. Sweets can scarcely have become the universal food of children while sugar remained an expensive luxury, as it did, apparently, until the eighteenth century. There were sweets in Shakespeare's day, but I doubt whether the children of the poor often tasted the March bane and kissing comfits which are mentioned in his plays. There were, we are told, no confectioners, as we now know them, till the nineteenth century. Until then sweet-making was in the hands of druggists—which suggests that the ancestor of all those delicacies that are eaten to-day in defiance of the laws of health was that medicinal utility, the cough-drop. Even to-day the chemist remains half a confectioner, with his liquorice, his pastilles and his glass jars full of marsh mallows. As in the world of sport, however, what was once done for utilitarian ends is now done for pleasure. The sportsman with his gun has turned the work of his forefathers into a delight, and the child of to-day sucks for pure joy the jujube, the counterpart of which was sucked two hundred years ago as medicine.

How fortunate that doctors once thought that sweets were good for us! There are few things, I imagine, that have made a greater contribution to the physical happiness of mankind. How the infant imagination is stirred by the sight of those crowded boxes and bottles in the sweet-shop window! If the small boy has only a penny clutched tightly in his hand, let him be sure to make up his mind what he wants to buy before he enters the shop. If he does not, what agonies of indecision he will experience when he stands before the counter and sees all those glass-jars of loveliness, each of them inviting him to ignore its rivals and to make it his choice! How is it possible for him to be sure whether he wants bull's-eyes more than brandy-balls, pear-drops more than barley-sugar? The truth is, he wants everything he sees. There is not a jar in the shop the sight of which does not fill him with an ache of longing, from his gullet down to the pit of his stomach. Great are the joys of greed, but great also are its sufferings. The choice is easier to make if he has a sister with whom he is expected to share his treasures and who, he knows, dislikes some particular kind of sweets, such as coconut chips. If he is a selfish boy, it is perfectly easy: he buys coconut chips. If he is an unselfish boy, he hesitates for a moment, and buys coconut chips. It is all very well to reproach the young with greed, but have you ever felt that pang of desire for almond rock and the more bitter pang of having to share it with so many others that there was only a tiny fragment left for yourself?

There is, I admit, something peculiarly obnoxious about a boy who eats sweets in company and never thinks of offering one to a friend: I knew such a boy, and we all regarded him as something like a murderer. At the same time, many a well-meaning boy has bought a packet of sweets with a rosily benevolent intention of sharing it with others when he gets home, and, by the time he has reached home, has discovered that somehow or other the packet is finished. I always found it difficult to get home with a box of nougat. When I bought it, I could see in my mind's eye the joyous faces of the others as I shared it with them. But, when I had mounted to the top of a bus, I could not help opening the box, and, when I opened the box, I could not help taking the silver wrapper off one of the pieces to look at it, and, when I took off the silver paper, I could not help tasting the nougat. The worst of nougat is that, when you begin eating it you want to go on eating it, and so I had a second piece. When I had finished the third piece I felt that there was so little left that I could not decently give it to be divided among so many, so I ate the last piece, too. Still, I had had my good moment. I had had my dream, and, if my home had not been so far from the shop the others would have realised what a Brother Cheeryble I was. At the same time, all I aspired to be, and was not, did not comfort me quite so easily as Rabbi Ben Ezra was comforted in comparable circumstances. What a greedy hog one seems to oneself just after the nougat is finished.

One curious feature of the love of sweets is the way in which it declines with age. There seems to be no reason for this. We still go on eating, and loving the pleasures of the palate, but I imagine that half the confectioners would go out of business if no one under thirty were allowed to eat sweets. There are a hundred greedy sweet-eaters under the age of thirty for one above it. You seldom see a middle-aged man peering with a rapt expression into a confectioner's window. His eyes may goggle before a cake-shop, especially in France, but he seldom gazes at a sweet-shop as if a vision of Heaven had been spread before him. Not that every middle-aged man is as indifferent to sweets as I am. I know a man of my own age who can eat chocolates even while he is drinking whiskey-and-soda. Women, too, nibble sweets after dinner. But they do not get really excited about them, as the young do. I do not know a single woman who would shout with joy if you offered her a sugar mouse. The sight of a chocolate Easter egg with a sugar hen sitting on it does not send the adult into raptures. Pass round a bagful of acid drops among your friends and see how many of them will thank you.

The test of a true sweet-eater is an almost indiscriminate love of sweets. He loves everything called sweets, from the despised acid drop to the most delicious sugar almond. He is equally happy whether he is making a swelling in his cheek with an enormous black ball (known in some places as a

humbug) or is crunching a nougatine. He adores butterscotch, but that does not make him despise liquorice laces. He can appreciate the fine flavours of cunningly prepared chocolates, and at the same time do full justice to a peppermint drop. I do not remember disliking a single sweet when I was a child. On the whole, I should have preferred almost any other sweets to aniseed balls, but I could eat aniseed balls. The child has preferences among sweets, but, as a rule, no hatred.

My own preference was, I think, for almond rock—that dark slab with the islands of nuts in it and the white circumference. At the same time, who could resist the lure of those sweets that changed colour as one sucked them? Was it not one of the marvels of the world that a sweet that was blue when it entered the mouth should have turned a lovely red when one removed it for a look? Suck it a little longer, take it out again, and it will have miraculously turned green. Do the confectioners still make such wonders, or has hygiene suppressed them? It was the police who suppressed one of the favourite sweets of my childhood. This was a flat honey-flavoured sweet, one sweet standing on the top of another in the packet. One of the chief inducements to buy them was that, if you were lucky, you might find a threepenny bit sandwiched between two of the sweets. As a result, the infancy of the town bought shillingsworths of the stuff in the hope of discovering an unearned threepence. Then a moralist heard of this dangerous incitement to gambling, and suppressed the pretty custom as a lottery. The sweets never tasted quite the same afterwards.

I sometimes wonder whether our later tastes for tobacco, beer, wine and whiskey are sufficient compensation for our loss of the appetite for sweets. One cannot somehow feel the same excitement of choice in a cigarette-shop or a public-house as one once felt in a sweet-shop. If I go in to buy cigarettes, I do not find myself longing for all the brands of cigarettes I see on the shelves or the counter. I do not walk out of the shop with the packet of cigarettes as with a treasure. I buy the stuff not so much for pleasure as for the purpose of avoiding the discomfort of not smoking. Cigar-smokers and wine-experts, they say, retain in their pleasures some of the child's excitement among sweets. But even they have lost the child's blessed indiscriminateness of enjoyment. Half their pleasure comes from being able to tell the difference between a good wine or cigar and a bad one. The child, on the other hand, is in the happy position of living in a world in which greed and not fastidiousness is the source of pleasure. It has never heard of bad sweets, but loves sweets all with the same largeheartedness with which it loves old fireworks and all the stars.

Y. Y.

"MERCY PAYS"

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT RECENTLY IN U.S.A.]

THIS legend was observed by the writer emblazoned in electric lights by a Chicago sky sign appealing for charitable relief for the unemployed. To comment upon so tersely perfect an expression of the American capitalist's attitude towards the question of unemployment relief is crassly unaesthetic. For the purposes of sociological inquiry, however, into some of the moods and methods of the ruling class in America, a few words of amplification may perhaps be permitted.

The dividends of mercy would, I think, be described by any capable salesman of this particular bond issue when working up a prospective "contact," somewhat as follows:

"It is true, sir," the super-salesman of mercy would begin, "that this script which I have here, viz., the receipt for your subscription to the consolidated charities of this city, operated since Mr. Insull merged them, under the trade name of 'Mercy, Inc.,' will not give you any apparent return on your money. So much it has in common with some of the other stocks in which you have in recent years invested. None the less, we believe that we can convince you that its yield is, in fact, very substantial.

"Now the business of 'Mercy, Inc.," is to keep alive those residents in this city who would otherwise and forthwith die of hunger. We are confident that we can at any time demonstrate to you that this operation is carried on at the very lowest possible cost. Eminent dietitians have worked out for the corporation the minimum quantities of food necessary to sustain life, and we can assure you that no more is ever given. Indeed, the field for the corporation's activities is so wide and so constantly extending that with its present capitalisation it does not provide anything like this minimum quantity of food. For its experience is that the persons in receipt of relief do, in fact, live for quite long periods on far less than the prescribed minimum rations.

"It may be, sir, that this raises in your mind the important question of why these persons should be kept alive at all. It is, I need hardly say, of the very essence of the policy of this corporation to provide an answer to this question. Our house slogan, 'Mercy Pays,' is itself proof that we do not for a moment suggest that you should show mercy for mercy's sake. No, sir, we convince every one of our stock holders that he is merciful on at least a 10 per cent. basis. That's how we get our business.

"Why, then, is it necessary that these persons should be kept alive? Naturally 'Mercy, Inc.' does not for one moment challenge the sacred principle inscribed in the constitution of our country that the destitution of the unemployed is wholly their own fault. Let us assure you that all our investigators emphasise this fact to the unemployed themselves. Yes, sir, they certainly let them know it. As one of our lady investigators said to a man discharged, with some ten thousand others, from the International Harvester Company this year, 'What is there in the constitution or the laws of this State to prevent your starting an agricultural machinery plant of your own? Nothing at all, it is just sheer lack of initiative, that's what it is.' 'Mercy, Inc.' never forgets to let the unemployed feel their position, we assure you of that, sir.

"Now, sir, it may surely seem to you that the true solution of this great unemployment problem is just precisely not to feed the unemployed. For then it would seem there would be no unemployed left. Now, sir, our corporation has given the very closest attention to this question, and our high executives have unanimously come to the conclusion that this seeming solution is facile. In the first place, it is by no means certain that the unemployed would all, or even in a majority of cases, die if we ceased to feed them. This is an unpleasant fact, but it must be faced. It is the regrettable truth, sir, that this country is governed by corrupt politicians. And these politicians would not, it is the considered view of this corporation, stick even at the disgraceful project of maintaining the unemployed at the public charge by means of a dole. For the unemployed have not yet, we intensely regret to say, been deprived of their vote. Nor are they incapable of the infamous design of using it in order to obtain food for their families. 'Mercy, Inc.' does not need to emphasise the disastrous consequences to you of such an eventuality. You would be legally compelled to pay taxes for the maintenance of these persons. Such taxes, 'Mercy, Inc.' statisticians have computed, would amount to no less than 10 per cent. of your income. It is, sir, upon this firm foundation of facts and figures that we base our claim that money invested in 'Mercy, Inc.' pays an immediate 10 per cent. dividend.

"Now, sir, you may have a further objection. You may believe that it will be possible to prevent our rascally politicians from appropriating our money for the unemployed. But, sir, even in that case, is it 100 per cent. certain that the unemployed will die quickly, quietly, and in sufficient numbers? I would not dream, sir, of suggesting to you the consequences of the unemployed refusing—to dispose of themselves, shall we say—in a decent and orderly manner. But, sir, as you know, the police force of this city is paid but irregularly. . . .

"Yes, sir, we usually sell this script in blocks of ten thousand

dollars. I thank you, sir. 'Mercy, Inc.' is happy to hand you this specially engraved receipt containing the words of the great poet Shakespeare:

"The quality of mercy is not strained,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven."

"What's that, sir? No rain lately in Chicago? Why, sir, that certainly is a good one—'no rain lately in Chicago'—I suppose that's why I have to do the straining. I thank you, sir."

EXAMINATIONS

"They work to pass, not to know; and outraged Science takes her revenge. They do pass, and they don't know."—Huxley.

SOME fifty thousand boys and girls of sixteen or thereabouts have just heard the results of the School Certificate Examination. Their parents and teachers, concerned as they are with the future of particular children, regard the examination as the gateway to a job. Whether it performs that task with discrimination is a matter of dispute, but that is not its main official function. In the words of a recent semi-official utterance its aim is "to provide a suitable test of the ordinary work of a secondary school at the fifth form stage." (*The School Certificate Examination.* Report of Investigators appointed by the Secondary School Examination Council. H.M. Stationery Office. 1932.)

A plain, straightforward statement one might think; and yet it raises two questions of considerable moment. What *is* "the ordinary work of a secondary school," and what part of it can be tested by examination in children of sixteen?

Looking back on his schooldays, the average man is apt to discover how little remains of the *detailed* knowledge he then acquired. Some facts and skills are kept bright by vocational use. The rest grow rusty when schooling is over. What then is the object of learning so many things, so few of which survive in manhood? With Mr. Bertrand Russell, I would say that the end is the production of a civilised person. Facts and skills are for the most part the vehicles of civilisation, not its content. They pass through the adolescent mind and are gone, but they should, like lightning flashes, illuminate in their passage the broad features of the surrounding country. The civilised man should possess this outline picture of the world in time and space; an ethically neutral picture, possessing proportion and unity, yet capable of growth and change. Like the key map of the Ordnance Survey, it should serve him as a guide to detailed knowledge; and even when he does not use it in this serious way, we may hope that he finds it fun. The civilised man should also have acquired certain habits of thought. He should be able to distinguish well enough for ordinary human purposes between the public world of fact and the private world of taste and phantasy, and should be skilled in getting the best out of both. He should have the habit, as Mr. Russell says, "of forming opinions upon evidence." Finally, we may add certain traits of character, and a kind of zest in the use of his mind and body.

I have stated my conception of the civilised man with the dogmatism demanded by brevity, and I am aware that it is both incomplete and debatable. My object is not, however, to argue the pros and cons of this difficult question, but to draw attention to a certain distinction. I mean the distinction between the detailed facts and skills that are examined and forgotten, and those more general and lasting things (whatever they are) that facts and skills should illuminate or engender. Now it so happens that these more general things that I have called "civilisation" are not readily examinable in children of sixteen. This is not the fault of examiners. They have tried to measure some of these things without success. As the Report quoted above puts it, "the sustained attempt to make History papers test the logical and critical powers of the sixteen-year-old candidate has proved a failure." It may be said that these children are not civilised, that they possess no critical powers to be tested. It is more probable that any critical powers they have are not yet sufficiently mature and practised to find expression on paper under examination conditions. Examinations at sixteen can therefore be little more than a testing of facts and routine skills.

We can now understand the dilemma in which so many teachers find themselves. Facts and routine skills will suffice for the examination. Civilisation is not tested. If the teacher lets civilisation go hang and spends his time cramming home the facts and skills, he will, other things being equal, improve his paper results. Paper results are demanded alike by education authorities, employers and parents. For the education authority the examination is "a test of the work of a school"—and of the teacher. For the employer it is a test of education. For the parent it is the first step in his child's career. Is it great wonder when the teacher, driven by fear for his livelihood, and by a sense of responsibility for the future of particular children, settles down to a process of relentless cramming?

The evil is not confined within the borders of each subject. It extends to the whole structure of the curriculum. Certain subjects, such as Art and Music, were included for their cultural value among those which may be taken at the Examination, but success in this group is not an essential requirement. These subjects, therefore, tend to be neglected, and the curriculum becomes limited to work that is more likely to yield a pass. Exemption from Matriculation may be obtained if a School Certificate is acquired with credit in certain subjects. Matriculation was intended as a university entrance examination, but employers have come to demand it as a condition of employment. The curriculum is therefore limited still further to that combination of studies which most readily leads to a matriculation certificate, in spite of the official warning that "the Examination should follow the curriculum and not determine it." Borderline work between the subjects is discouraged by examination pressure. Why should the teacher of Geography take pains to link his subject with History and Science and Mathematics? His job is to get a high percentage of passes in Geography, and his colleagues must take care of themselves. So knowledge is presented to the child like the scattered pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Each teacher is greatly concerned that the child shall pick up a particular bit. It is no one's business that the pieces shall be fitted together to form a world picture.

I have limited this discussion to the School Certificate Examination, though there are others in the school career which present similar problems. But the School Certificate problem is, perhaps, the most urgent, and until it is solved the further development of secondary education will be greatly hampered. Various solutions have been proposed. Of these the most drastic would abolish the examination altogether and substitute for it internal tests conducted by the schools. Much might be said for and against this proposal. It is doubtful, however, whether it is yet practical politics. Some have suggested that all candidates should receive certificates on which should be recorded the candidate's performance in each subject offered, irrespective of success in the examination as a whole. There is a risk that such a reform might merely replace the present limitations of the curriculum by vocational specialisation. The Investigators appointed by the Secondary Schools Examination Council of the Board of Education have proposed that Matriculation should no longer be granted upon the School Certificate Examination alone. This is a step forward, since it will largely eliminate the scramble for matriculation certificates to which I have referred.

But the root of the problem remains untouched. It lies in the fact that the examination is regarded as a test of the work of a school and of the education of individuals. While this is the case, the work of the school will be limited to those things which are examinable in children of sixteen. And so long as employers consider a school certificate to be a proof of education, that education will consist only of facts and routine skills. There are some things that cannot be done by regulation, but only by *valuation*. The Board and the local authorities should state publicly and repeatedly that they *value* the real ends of education above any number of school certificates, and that

they will judge schools accordingly, in the light of the reports of their inspectors. Employers should be encouraged to attach importance to school estimates of ability, character and general intelligence. Such estimates would be of considerable value if expressed in terms of order of merit within the school. If these things were done, the Examination itself would begin to acquire greater value as a measure of education, since no longer regarded as its end. The School Certificate is rather like the toy in the looking-glass shop. If we look at it too directly, it will elude us as a test of education. It will only begin to acquire some value in that role if we are careful only to see it out of the corner of an eye. R. P.

Correspondence

FASCISTS AND COMMUNISTS

SIR,—You appear to favour the proposed counter-demonstration in Hyde Park on September 9th, and this on the ground that it will make disorder less likely. Yet if you desire to see Fascism powerless, if you believe in free speech and in the maintenance of order, whatever the government in power, surely all the weight of your influence should be directed to ensuring that Hyde Park be empty but for Fascists on that day? And if the politically minded working class are to be protected alike from Fascist physical brutality and from Fascist doctrine, and if Left Wing leaders have any control over their followers, surely it is open to those leaders to put a ban on Hyde Park on September 9th, or to organise a counter demonstration elsewhere?

In face of such simple alternatives, it is difficult for one of liberal views to understand your advocacy of a step which is almost bound to lead to serious clashes between organised bodies and to put the maximum strain on the forces of the police. Or is the simple explanation the obvious one—and do you lack the courage of your own convictions? At least, your readers are entitled to some elucidation. J. CARPENTER

10 Warwick Court, W.C.1.

[If it were possible to keep "Hyde Park empty but for Fascists," that would certainly be the best objective. Further, we agree that a simultaneous Communist demonstration is for many reasons undesirable. Our complaint was directed against the negative attitude of official Labour, which leads to the view in the working-class movement that Communists are the only keen leaders against Fascism. Thousands of non-Communist trade unionists and others will go to Hyde Park in any case to answer the challenge given to them by the Fascists. The question is whether they are to be led peaceably or not at all.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

"PRISON"

SIR,—Is Mr. Franklin quite up to date in his knowledge of prison conditions? In the Prison Act of 1877, it is provided that:

> A clear difference should be made between the treatment of persons unconvicted of crimes, and in law presumably innocent, and the treatment of convicted prisoners. . . . They shall be confined in such manner as to make it as little as possible oppressive, due regard only being had to their safe custody, and the necessity of preserving order and good government in the place in which they are confined, and to the physical and moral well-being of the prisoners themselves.

In his recent book, Mr. Fox, the Secretary of the Prison Commission, points out that the large majority of these untried prisoners are not, as may often be supposed, respectable and probably innocent people, but "old hands" with, in all probability, quite a string of previous convictions—whatever may be their fate on the charges pending. "The prevention of contamination is therefore a matter of importance, introducing serious difficulties into the question whether trial prisoners should be allowed to associate together." He also points out that as regards food, drink, clothing, books, newspapers, and other means of occupation, the Rules are similar to those for the First Division. The trial prisoner is allowed to see his legal advisers in private on any week-day at any reasonable time; and he can be visited on any week-day by not more than three friends at a time. There is no restriction on the number of letters he may write and receive. In various prisons, the experiment has lately been tried of permitting the trial prisoners to associate together, and to smoke during their exercise period. Mr. Fox's own comment is that "though the conditions must be uncomfortable, and may seem to the respectable novice both degrading and depressing, they do aim to be humane, helpful and fair." No one will suggest that the problem of the remand prisoner has been satisfactorily solved; but it should be borne in mind that there *is* a problem. Also, it behoves us to recognise the efforts that are being made to improve matters. Apart from the one-sidedness of his criticisms, and his implicit suggestion that the restrictions are deliberately or unimaginatively imposed, merely to annoy and humiliate unconvicted men and women, I, of course, agree with Mr. Franklin that the remand prisoner has a grievance which, so far as is practicable, should be removed. HARRY ROBERTS

Oakshott Hanger,
Hawkley, Liss, Hants.

THE HERRING RATIONALISED

SIR,—Have you been altogether fair to the Sea Fish Commission in describing the Herring Report as "of the familiar type in that it aims at eliminating redundant producers, and that the consumers seem likely to be called upon to foot the bill"? The scheme is completely different from the Agricultural Marketing Schemes so far adopted, and it represents a real effort to get away from the bias towards high prices through security and restriction which has drawn criticism upon those schemes.

Perhaps you will allow me to point some of these differences out. Agricultural Marketing Boards are set up as producers' boards, by a vote of two-thirds or more of the producers, who can, and do, unseat members of the Board suspected of not putting producers' interests first. The proposed Herring Board, on the other hand, will be appointed entirely by responsible Ministers, and the chairman and two other members (out of a maximum of eight) must come from outside the industry. Again, the Herring Report lays great emphasis on the falling off in demand through excessive price and lack of attention to consumer needs. As a remedy, it insists upon the need for reorganisation embracing processing and marketing as well as producing, and lays down as a "basic principle of readjustment" that "markets can be won and developed only on the basis of lowered prices to the consumer for an article that is in first-rate condition, and capable of competing successfully with alternative foods."

Surely, Sir, this is a principle which deserves a rather warmer welcome. It marks a definite repudiation of the principle of higher prices for the producer, to be got by fair means or foul, which has sometimes been alleged to underlie earlier schemes of this type.

16 Queen Anne's Gate, MAX NICHOLSON
S.W.1.

THE STAVSKY CASE

SIR,—In my capacity as the member of the Palestinian Bar who defended the three persons recently acquitted by the Palestinian Courts on the charge of having been concerned in the murder of the late Dr. Arlosoroff, viz., Abraham Stavsky, Zevi Rosenblatt and Dr. Abba Achi Meir, I feel bound to make certain observations on a passage in your article, on *Prosperity and Strife in Palestine*.

The writer alludes to the Arlosoroff case and refers to all the three defendants having been acquitted "on legal grounds." Though the user of the expression "on legal grounds" may be conceivably (though by no means necessarily) correct as a matter of strict juridical terminology, the words are in my opinion ambiguous, and misleading from the point of view of the lay reader, since they may tend to convey the impression that each of the three accused was acquitted on bare legal technicalities, and quite irrespective of the facts and merits of the case. It is consequently necessary to explain the real position.

Adopting an extremely conservative attitude towards the evidence of the country, and making apparently a pious attempt to save its own learned judges from themselves, the Mandatory Power has enacted a law that no conviction shall be based on the evidence of a single witness, unless there exists adequate material corroboration. In the case of Stavsky, three out of the four members of the Assize Court having believed the evidence of the main witness for the prosecution (Mrs. Arlosoroff, the widow of the deceased) found (in a judgment whose meagreness was adversely commented on by the appellate Court) vaguely and generally and by implication that such corroboration did exist, and convicted, while the fourth member not merely dissented from the judgment

of guilty but wrote an independent judgment finding affirmatively that Stavsky (*and* Rosenblatt) was in fact innocent. On appeal the Supreme Court quashed the conviction and acquitted Stavsky, on the ground that the corroboration required by law for the evidence of the principal witness did not exist.

Rosenblatt was acquitted by the Assize Court itself, since the Court "did not find the other material evidence required to corroborate his identification by Mrs. Arlosoroff." Dr. Abba Achi Meir was acquitted by the Assize Court prior even to the defence being opened, inasmuch as it was held that there was no case for the defence to answer, "the evidence submitted not being sufficient to establish the charge," a ruling which involved on the face of it the complete stultification of the prosecution.

If then one adopts practical as distinguished from technical language, it follows that Dr. Achi Meir was acquitted on the facts, and that Stavsky and Rosenblatt were acquitted by reason of the circumstance that no facts were proved sufficient to comply with the legal requirements of the country.

1 Hare Court, Temple, E.C.4. HORACE SAMUEL

"SCOTCH"

SIR,—I think I can answer Mr. Corbett. "Scots" (when it is not the plural of Scot) is a "lazy" contraction of "Scotch," which in its turn is a lazy contraction of "Scottish." The three adjectives, in the best Scots language, are interchangeable, so far as meaning is concerned, and can be, and are, interchanged for purposes of emphasis. Here are three successive lines of the same ode:

I sing the juice Scots bear can mak' us
In glass or jug.
O thou, my Muse! guid auld Scotch drink . . .

In the first line the emphasis is thrown on the "bear." In the last the fine sonority of the "Guid auld Scotch drink" gets part of its effect from the emphasis obtained by the use of the more elaborate adjective; "Scottish" might have been more effective yet, but it wouldn't scan; and Burns, whatever else he was, was none of your namby-pamby *vers librists*. I have never been able to understand the objection some Scots purists have to the word "Scotch," except that it is ugly both in print and sound, except when deliberately used, as above. They might as well try to insist on the still older adjective:

Ye Scottis men spend a' our King's gowd
And a' our Queenis fee.

67 Sterndale Road, West Kensington, London, W.14. W. S. RENWICK

[We select the above from a large correspondence on this topic.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

CAPTAIN DONNELLAN

SIR,—Mr. Garnett is quite right in correcting Mr. Plomer's remark in his contribution to *The Old School* as to "a certain Theodosius Boughton who poisoned a Captain Donnellan, his sister's lover, with laurel-water." But I think I am right in correcting Mr. Garnett's statement that the "scoundrel, Donnellan, was acquitted." Donnellan was tried before Mr. Justice Buller at the Warwick Assizes on Friday, March 31st, 1781, found guilty and duly hanged. TREVOR BLEWITT

3 Guilford Place, W.C.1.

VOLUNTARY HOSPITALS

SIR,—As one who has had forty years' experience of surgical and medical co-operation in connection with hospitals, may I ask Mr. Syrett to tell us what are "the great advantages and public benefit derived from our Great Voluntary System?" I can only say that I have failed to find any.

I live in a large provincial town. Possibly in London it may never happen that a patient comes many miles at great inconvenience, and considerable expense in money, time, and suffering to see a specialist, only to wait a whole morning to find that the specialist has not had time to see the patient. In London does it never happen for a patient to wait so long for an operation as to endanger the chance of cure? Are patients never sent out when the surgeon would, if he could, keep him longer, because the need of beds is so great? Through constant lack of funds this state of things is inherent under the Voluntary System, whereas in the city in which I work the Municipal Hospitals are continually enlarging to meet the demand.

Mr. Syrett asks if those of us who believe in Municipal Hospitals have considered the cost. Has he ever considered the waste in human life of the present system, whereby a patient in hospital is advised a few weeks' or months' treatment, where really months or years are necessary? Is there not a different standard of health for the working-class and that of the well-to-do?

If the Voluntary Hospitals had any adequate system of "After Care" or observation of the patients who have been discharged as cured, they would themselves be the first to condemn the system, when they saw the unsatisfactory results.

In conclusion, with regard to the system of accountancy used by the King Edward Hospital Fund, preventing waste, I have good reason to be somewhat sceptical. Some years ago, to please our auditor, the committee of the society of which I am hon. secretary adopted this system. I find that to obtain any satisfactory knowledge as to how the money is being spent I have to keep a separate set of accounts. Though I am not suggesting that there is waste, I can assure Mr. Syrett that this system of accounts makes it quite easy to hide such, should it be there.

VOLUNTARY WORKER

THE POSITION OF NURSES

SIR,—I think most nurses will agree that "Resident Medical Officer's" case (a cast-iron one) suffers from both over and under statement. On the one hand, that "women who are sufficiently responsible to take up nursing can put themselves to bed at a reasonable hour" is, judged by my experience, a belief generous to the point of idealism. On the other hand, at a hospital which I take to be fairly representative:

> Nurses are forbidden to go out, in their own time, without hats or stockings. The prohibition was expressly renewed during this summer, when a heat-wave made bare heads and legs practically universal.
>
> They are forbidden to smoke in their own rooms, in the recreation rooms, or anywhere except in a small and rather uncomfortable room at the top of the building.
>
> Their private interests and relationships are liable to criticism in the course of a professional reprimand.
>
> In some wards they are not informed until they reach the ward when they will be "off duty" that day, and are thus unable to accept any formal social engagement whatever.
>
> Attendance at chapel, except for Roman Catholics, is compulsory. I myself know of numbers of Nonconformists, several agnostics, a Buddhist and a militant atheist whose devotions are considered essential at a daily Church of England service lasting a quarter of an hour.

Is it surprising that the communities and individuals committed to full acceptance of such conditions form the hardest-dying *foci* of what *Punch* of the 1880s called feline amenities?

PROBATIONER

A CLASSLESS EDUCATION

SIR,—On those comparatively rare occasions when anybody presumes to question the divine right of Oxford and Cambridge to monopolise the plums of the public service appointments, it is usually thought to be a sufficient answer if the older universities dismiss the challenge with a contemptuous reference to the "old, old jealousy of Oxford and Cambridge." Rarely can their champions be tempted into the arena; and the letter from "Upper Class" is itself sufficient evidence of the wisdom of this reticence.

He defends the existing Oxford and Cambridge monopoly on the ground that at those universities are to be found the best teachers, the best libraries, and the best educational facilities generally. That may be so, but surely this argument evades the point at issue. Is a good man from Oxford to be given preference over a better man from, say, Liverpool, merely because the former had access to these superior facilities? Few people would (if only on sentimental grounds) challenge the soundness or fairness of a system which gave the older universities a moderate preponderance in the appointment of officers to the higher administrative posts in the Civil Service. But who will say that the superiority of the libraries, teachers, etc., at Oxford and Cambridge is so remarkable as to justify the appointment of fifty-eight candidates from those universities to the Upper Division of the Civil Service during a period in which only two men from all the other universities in England were considered worthy? And who will claim that such a system of recruitment is truly competitive?

Replying to the charge that members of that "close corporation"

are exclusive in their sympathies and narrow in their experience "Upper Class" goes on to ask, "How are we to know that administrators drawn from any other educational sources but these two universities would not be just as exclusive in their sympathies and narrow in their experience?" How indeed, but by giving them an opportunity to show us? Even if a graduate of Manchester proves to be no wider in his sympathies than a graduate of Oxford, the community ought to be the gainer by the change; for the monopoly will be somewhat relieved, and a closer approach to equality of opportunity, as well as of representation in the government of the country, will have been achieved. RADICAL

CATS AND PASSPORTS

SIR,—I have recently come across an extreme example of bureaucratic foolishness. A Swiss friend of mine, who has lived for many years in Germany, is leaving there to return to Switzerland. She has a cat, German-born. To take this cat with her, she must get not only a medical certificate for it, costing 6 marks, but also a passport, which will cost 20 marks. It is no doubt right to be careful about the transmission of diseases by immigrant animals, but a 20 mark passport for a cat seems absurd. I do not know if the Swiss authorities insist on this, or if it is an international arrangement, or if it is a Nazi device for maintaining "die Zusammengehorigkeit des Auslandsdeutschtums mit dem Deutschtum im Reich." Some other people I have heard of also had to get a 20 mark passport for their cat when they moved from Germany to Holland. It would be interesting to know whether this country, too, in the person of Sir John Simon, requests and requires in the name of His Majesty free passage without let or hindrance and every assistance and protection for cats which are British subjects by birth, marriage or naturalisation. O.

[We learn on inquiry that it is not Sir John Simon but Mr. Walter Elliot who is responsible for the importation of cats into this country. A licence is necessary, and there is a six months' quarantine period arranged by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

DIAGHILEFF

SIR,—I have been asked by Messrs. Gollancz to undertake a full-length biography of Serge Diaghileff. If any of your readers should possess some of his rare letters, or have any particular knowledge relating to him that I can add to the rich material already at my disposal, I would be most grateful if they would communicate with me. ARNOLD L. HASKELL

22 Hornton Street, W.8.

Miscellany

SALVADOR DALI

THE art of Salvador Dali is not art, in the strict sense of the word, it is psycho-sexual exposition; it is literature.

In speaking of the word artist we may classify him as belonging to one of two distinct groups; one preoccupied with creating a fantasy-world in which the fulfilment of wishes is realised, the other concerned with the contemplation of formal relations and a distinctive aesthetic activity. Not only is Surréalisme chiefly occupied with the translation of dream imagery, whether it be in the discourse of literature, philosophy, cinematographic art, painting or sculpture, but the school actually professes no attempt to induce aesthetic appreciation in their art. "Surréalisme is pure psychic automatism, by which it is intended to express, verbally, in writing or by other means, the real process of thought. It is thought's dictation, *all exercise of reason and every aesthetic or moral preoccupation being absent.*"

The Surréalistes, for the most part, are former adherents of the Dadaiste movement. In 1913 de Chirico opened the path to Surréalisme with his use of perspective to suggest agoraphobia and claustrophobia. This vein of psycho-pathology in art extended itself into a veritable psychological research in which Breton and Eluard, the literary exponents of the Surréaliste group, uttered weird manifestations in prose and literature, Giacometti in sculpture, and Dali in painting. Indeed, it can now honestly be affirmed that the art of Dali, for instance, is not art but a new form, certainly an interesting form, of psycho-pathology. In point of fact, the Surréaliste definition of painting is "Photographie à la main et en couleurs de l'irrationalité concrète et du monde imaginatif en général."

Dali has declared that the moment is now at hand for what he calls the systematisation of confusion, and the total discrediting of the world of reality. Thus, the painter, for example, will paint natural objects with the greatest care and verisimilitude, but he will never juxtapose objects which are normally seen together. He will, on the contrary, seek to bring about the most alarming and awe-inspiring encounters between contrary images "as beautiful, to the Surréaliste concept, as the unexpected meeting of a sewing-machine and an umbrella on a dissecting table." Such express counter-thesis is Dali's victimisation of the mythological and harmless William Tell, whom he resuscitated in the same way as Oedipus was reintegrated by Freud for his famous complex. In the well-known film *L'age d'or* he exemplifies the sadistic tendencies of the Surréaliste school by making William Tell deliberately and viciously shoot his son instead of the apple!

Naturally, considerable commotion is usually aroused whenever a Surréaliste exhibition takes place, for few literary or artistic schools have expressed their tendencies with such deliberate violence; violence, indeed, governed by distinct anarchic, athiestic and communistic views. The exhibition of Salvador Dali, the Surréaliste painter, has this year been no less inducive to varyingly severe and laudatory criticism. This is chiefly to be accounted for in the fact that many have misunderstood the philosophy of the Surréalistes, or found it too involved to understand. In a recent meeting with René Crevel, one of the leading literary demonstrators of the group, he explained to me their dictum of "Surréalisme au service de la révolution" in the following terms, "La libération de l'esprit ne saurait avoir lieu sans la liberté de l'homme, et la libération de l'homme ne peut avoir lieu que par la révolution prolétarienne."

Even when comprehended, their theory of psycho-pathology and Freudian interpretation of dreams meets with considerable controversy, because of its unnecessarily involved argument and illustration. Thus Dali's pictorial subject-matter constitutes an association of ideas which, translated in Freudian symbolism, gives liberation to his paranoiac inhibitions! And who, it may be rightly argued, is interested in the fantastic manifestations of a strange individual's sexual repressions? It is interesting to note at this point of inquiry that Surréalisme is proclaimed "a form of unloading in Freudian symbolism the inhibitions of the paranoiac, an outburst of eccentricities giving relief to these inhibitions." According to medical definition paranoia, the itch of these revolutionaries, is a chronic form of insanity characterised by systematic delusions: it is classed among the psychoses, and in the psycho-analytic view owes its origin to an irregularity in psycho-sexual development. Breton and Eluard have shown, in their "Immaculate Conception," the poetical magnificence to which the simulation of such plainly evident delirium can apparently attain. The painting of Dali, and not only the painting but the ensemble of his work, illustrates this.

The distinctive characteristics of Dali's paranoiac disorder lie in the peculiar form of his symptoms and in the mechanism by which they are reproduced. This mechanism is the projection of double images, which Dali himself explains in the following terms: "It is by means of a distinctly paranoiac procedure that it has been possible to obtain a double image; that is to say, the representation of a totally different object, it being devoid also of any deformation or abnormality which might lead to disclose any deliberate distortion. The obtaining of such an image has been made possible thanks to the violence of paranoiac thought, which, with ruse and ingenuity, has made use of a quantity of pretexts, coincidences, etc., profiting

by which to make appear the second image, which in this case, takes the place of the obsessed idea. The double image (of which an example can be that of a horse, being at the same time that of a woman) can extend, continuing the paranoiac procedure, to the existence of another obsessing idea so that the third image appears (that of a lion, for example), and so on, to the extent of a number of images limited uniquely by the degree of paranoiac capacity of the thought." This leads me to suggest that Dali's complicated inference is simply a high-flown manner of explaining the paranoiac vision of sex symbolism fused to inversed images.

Surréalisme then, is a mode of emotional expression, though its end must be described as the communication of apathetic rather than sympathetic feeling.

Herbert Read, speaking of Surréalisme in his *Art Now*, has stated that " many critics, too occupied with the symbolic content of painting such as Max Ernst's, do not stop to consider their aesthetic merits, and condemn them outright as being psychology or literature, anything but painting. Thereby such critics reveal their limitations, for if for a moment they would forget the symbolism they would discover (granted an unprejudiced sensibility) an endless charm in the colour and texture of the actual painting." Herbert Read has reason, I must admit, to argue thus in the case of Max Ernst, but not of Dali, for the simple reason that one cannot forget the symbolism in his painting, it being a total symbolic and paranoiac piece of literature. I am indeed stung to infer that the bright colour schemes in Dali's paintings may be due to a heightened blood pressure . . . quodlibet; and illustration of any form of Surréaliste art seems to be an out and out psycho-analysis of the ego, anything, as I have said, but art. The medical profession, as I have said already, states that brilliant or very rich colouring in phantasies and fantastic dreams always seem to result from some direct physical disturbance, such as heightened blood pressure, a weight pressing on the temples or brow, a chill of the forehead, or soreness or strain of the eyes. In his literary expositions Dali has many a time given example and illustration of his directly induced paranoiac double-image dream fantasies. I venture to wonder if he actually applies cold compresses to his forehead to induce highly coloured landscape settings!

Despite all Dali's involved pathological-cum-astral working hypothesis, his paintings and drawings can at least be admired for one unmistakable quality—that of excellent draughtsmanship and painting technique. His drawing is nervous but fine, and his anatomical studies fascinatingly exact. He is a genius of perspective. I would attribute this as being made possible by the fact that the landscape, originating from one seen in the artist's dreams, has subconsciously conveyed the feeling of infinite distance and timeless space, which two factors constitute the principles of Astral Plane landscape: an important theorem which, curiously enough, remains outside the consideration of the Surréaliste conception. Furthermore, his painting is *soigné*—rather in the manner of the primitives in its glazed, detailed perfection—while his clear, often hard, colours harmonise in a curious chiaroscuro emanating from a world of dream fantasy.

In an effort to attribute a certain aesthetic qualification to his art, the linear portrayal of Dali's oneirocritic imagery may at least be credited with a " lyrical intuition " which, according to Croce, proceeds from the mere ability of putting pencil to paper, brush to canvas.

ALEXANDER WATT

SIR NIGEL

Two theatrical knights have died this year, died suddenly and at an age well below the normal term. Sir Gerald du Maurier was transferring his activities more and more to the film; he had been sovereign in the West End theatre, and one felt that he was a man perplexed by changes in his kingdom; he would rather be rid of this crown and seek another. Sir Nigel Playfair's dominion was elsewhere; he was not a star-actor, as du Maurier had been, but he was a first-rate character player, particularly when he could exploit his own dry wit and sharp, definite personality; he will be remembered longer, however, as a manager-producer—Playfair of Hammersmith.

He sustained a tradition of classical and modern taste for more than a dozen years in an out-of-the-way theatre. In any other European capital such a pocket-size Academy and Opéra Comique would have been publicly recognised and assisted. In England the manager who undertakes to keep alive the classical repertory has to carry financial burdens while he is tackling artistic problems. The Lyric Theatre was extremely inconvenient for dwellers in many parts of London, notably the northern suburbs from which it might expect considerable support for Playfair's programme; it had a poor approach, it lacked space for meeting and talking between the acts, and its seating was certainly not luxurious. On the other hand it had what mattered most, good acoustics and visibility. Playfair gave it character; he created an audience under difficulties, and, on the whole, he held it. What he could not create was financial security; only endowment could do that.

A theatre which is staging costume plays, usually with the need for a good orchestra and a capable chorus, and offering a better than West End production at less than West End prices, may, with a success, just pay its way and a bit over. It is all very well to talk about mixing your paint with brains and loving beauty with economy; Playfair's decorators did that. They had to. But with all economies observed, such a theatre cannot make the big profits which build up reserves. There cannot be success all the time, and the loss, when a play fails to please, is far greater than the gain when it does please. A bad month will neutralise a good year. A manager in Playfair's position can never sit back and feel comfortable; in Germany or France the State or the city would see him through. He could then concentrate on his proper theatrical work. In England the State occasionally gives such a man a knighthood; this costs the community not a halfpenny and pays no ha'porth of the poor man's costs of production. Most managers of this kind would rather be insured than ennobled.

In New York the Hammersmith Lyric could probably have built up a subscribing public, as the Theatre Guild has done. But the English public will not subscribe for a season. They pick and choose their pieces. And their caprice in picking defies all conjecture. Anybody with Playfair's knack of getting clever people round him might have scored a few hits; it was his triumph to keep the theatre of taste open for well over a decade and to recover from the disappointments, suffered with dramatists as far apart as Shakespeare and Pirandello. He made his house a feature of the town and a principal part of its civilisation; its stage was a delight to the eye, and its musicians raided the centuries to gratify the ear, while the choice and the handling of the play assumed an audience of adult understanding.

He will be regarded mainly as a producer of eighteenth-century classics, to which he brought a light and playboy touch. His " fantastications," as A. B. Walkley called them, were never wanton; he could always give a good reason for his methods. *The Way of the World* had usually led to bankruptcy. " This," wrote Playfair, " I put down largely to its extremely complicated action—a jungle of passionless intrigues—which an ordinary audience finds hard to follow; and what an ordinary audience finds hard to follow it rejects altogether. I therefore burlesqued the plot considerably and treated it as a joke." His policy was certainly justified at the box-office, and the Hammersmith public, though capricious on occasions, had a habit of being right as often as not.

But, while memories of that theatre will be chiefly connected with Gay, Congreve, Sheridan, Vanbrugh, and, among the moderns, with A. P. Herbert, there is one production which I believe Playfair would particularly like to be given honourable mention in any record of his work. That was his *As You Like It* of 1920. In recent years we have heard a great deal

about the necessity of rescuing Shakespeare from stale traditions by discarding the old business and abolishing the solemn atmosphere of a cultural exercise, an educational routine. Now Stratford-on-Avon sees Mr. Komisarjevsky's experiments, and the "Old Vic" witnesses all sorts of queerness undismayed. Playfair's *As You Like It*, with Lovat Fraser's almost pedantically faithful medievalism (described in some quarters as "futurist"!), was an early and brilliant attempt to see Shakespeare afresh and to recover the vitality which had been overwhelmed by the treatment of this superb comedy as a curriculum piece, so suitable for the schoolboy. Miss Athene Seyler's Rosalind and Mr. Herbert Marshall's Jacques were especially praised by those who felt that Shakespeare was being set free. But the production was not everywhere approved. At Stratford, whither it was bravely carried, it was regarded as an affront to all the ceremonial decencies of Bardolatry. Why, they had refused to carry on the stuffed stag that was specially kept in the museum for the purpose. This was treason in Stratford. But there have been some far odder spectacles in Stratford since then, a "fantasticated" "Merchant" with a Dresden China Portia and Morocco in the image of a golliwog. Playfair's *As You Like It* was pioneering in a line of country which has since been busily, perhaps too busily, explored.

He hated that stuffiness of which the museum stag was a symbol. Along with Lovat Fraser and his other lieutenants he polished up the eighteenth century and beat the moths out of the classics. It was done with wit and also with knowledge. People grumbled at his tricks, but an audience, if it wants to seem critical, has to grumble at something. He never burlesqued a classic in order to please the groundling rebels; he gave it his own twist because the theatre's audience must be a changing entity, and the old, if it is not only to please the antiquarian, must be seen from new angles. He assisted A. P. Herbert in the admirable attempt to restore to the English theatre light opera on contemporary themes. And when he gave up the Hammersmith venture and returned to the West End stage he left behind him a piece of theatrical history which should become a legend. His death, coming suddenly amid his active service in the Open Air Theatre, has desolated his friends; it has robbed the theatre of a vivid personality and London of one who gave colour and flavour to its life.

IVOR BROWN

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Dickens Touch

English people enjoy their gardens of "characters" as they do their gardens of flowers. This should ensure for Miss Gertrude Jennings' play *Family Affairs* at the Ambassadors as great a success as had the completely Anglicised *Christopher Bean*. There is a real touch of the richness and gusto of Dickens in Miss Jennings' pictures of the oddities, tensions, humours and just-averted tragedies in the life of a large family. She fails, too, where Dickens so often fails, in her moments of deeper feeling. The failure is not, as with Dickens, from excess of sentiment, but from fear of beauty. It is true that, in real life, people dress actions of poetry and heroism in the language of prose, but in a play good enough, as this is, to suggest, at least, a work of art, the moment of beauty should have its appropriate expression. This lack is found, too, in its principal actress, Miss Lilian Braithwaite. In all Lady Madehurst's lighter moments she is excellent, wise, tyrannical, lovable and selfish, saying that she can only sit in a chair and watch her children and grandchildren make mistakes, while really disentangling those mistakes with courage, tact and skill. Yet there is a lack of emotional depth, most noticeable in her one beautiful line to her prodigal—"Where was *I* to blame?"

Lovers of acting could go again and again to *Family Affairs* without exhausting the wealth of detail that Miss Athene Sayler brings to her rendering of Amy, Lady Madehurst's nervously deranged sister. London has not seen so rich and rounded a piece of character acting since Mr. Gwenn's George Radfern in *Laburnum Grove*. She gets the last ounce of humour from Amy's perpetually showing white petticoat, her "pergola of a hat," her inconsequent intelligence which is always right in the wrong way; and only the insensitive will miss the pathos of her distraught eyes, her monkey smile, her stoop, her ambling haste. The rest of the cast, too, were all amazingly good.

"Blackbirds of 1934"

Here at the Coliseum is a song-and-dance show which recalls, how unmistakably, the spacious '20's—incredibly fast, and noisily cacophonous, the voice of a world demanding more of everything and quicker, never mind what or how. The fact that it is a negro world (or perhaps negroid, in deference to the many shades of café au lait which the restless limbs revealed) need not affect the argument. The expression, if not the *décor*, is pure pre-crash American, with an attractive dash of naïveté. Observe, for instance, the solemn pretensions of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, fully choral, the crisp crudities of such sketches as "Women" or "Statler Services." "Picking a Plot," which I seem to remember in an earlier edition, is still a very funny piece of work on the ancient jest of the nigger in the graveyard, and Mr. Tim Moore's twitching shanks are great caricature. Elsewhere he is less funny. It is a heavy evening for Valaida, who sings, dances, conducts and plays a trumpet with tireless verve. One sees a little too much of some very able tap- and gymnastic-dancers, barely enough of a most attractive and well-drilled chorus, and far too little of Miss Edith Wilson. Her comedy numbers strike a rich vein of straightforward vulgarity, true Marie Lloyd metal, and she has the music-hall technique at her finger-ends.

Jean Harlow at the Empire

100% *Pure* is not quite hundred per cent. Harlow. Hampered by a somewhat foolish and artificial theme, Miss Harlow's personality is not able to rise to those brilliant and explosive heights already touched by that enchanting picture *Blonde Bombshell*. Nevertheless, it is an uncommonly amusing film. Miss Anita Loos and her husband, Mr. John Emerson, are responsible for the script, and though they cannot be congratulated on the story—which, let us hope, they did not invent—the dialogue is particularly felicitous, in a brisk *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* manner. Miss Harlow is a young woman with social ambitions; after escaping from a disreputable roadhouse, run by her mother and her rascally stepfather, she migrates to New York, where she fastens, or attempts to fasten, her manicured claws in the hide of a millionaire politician—Lionel Barrymore—from whom she rebounds towards his heir—Franchot Tone. Both actors give a capable and lively performance, Lionel Barrymore as the hard-bitten self-made man, Franchot Tone as the plutocratic "play-boy"; but, apart from Miss Harlow, the honours of the picture are carried off by Miss Patsy Kelly, a delightful actress with a plain but beguiling and wonderfully expressive face, whose character—unwordly, indiscriminately affectionate—bears a strong resemblance to that of Dorothy in Miss Loos's famous novel. Their misadventures at Palm Beach are especially diverting; but young love triumphs at the very end. Here is another example of a cynical picture, to which a moral message has been tacked on like an old shoe.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, August 31st—
Scottish Radio Exhibition, Glasgow.

SUNDAY, September 2nd—
Three Choirs Festival, Gloucester. And September 4th-7th.
Mrs. Barbara Wootton on "The Meaning of Social Equality," Conway Hall, 11.
Lantern Lecture, "February Fighting in Austria," by Herr Julius Deutsch, leader Austrian Defence Corps, Transport House, 7.30.

MONDAY, September 3rd—
"Napoleon Bonaparte," Embassy Theatre.

TUESDAY, September 4th—
National Dahlia Society Show, Horticultural Hall.
"The Shining Hour," St. James's Theatre.
"Midsummer Night's Dream," Regent's Park.

WEDNESDAY, September 5th—
British Association for the Advancement of Science, Aberdeen. Till September 12th.
"Murder in Mayfair," Globe Theatre.

THURSDAY, September 6th—
"Merrie England," Princes Theatre.

FRIDAY, September 7th—
Conway Forum: Gerald Heard on "Psychology, Nationalism and Social Service," Conway Hall, 7.30.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

CLAUDEL, meeting an English poet, spoke enthusiastically of his intense admiration of English literature—the English were the most wonderful poets in the world—" but too many of you write about daffodils. I get so tired of your daffodils." It is certainly a phenomenon of English literature: practically all of us who write take daffodils of one sort or another as our subject. " Country pleasures," said Hamlet to Ophelia—and they have always been our theme. The poets have seated their lovers on mossy banks by violets spread, surrounded by lambs, listening to nightingales and madrigal-singing birds. And an astonishing proportion of our novelists have preferred to write of country people, and have often limited themselves to one spot, a county or region of England. The reason is that it is easy to write pleasantly of pleasant things, and it is easier to read about them too. The English country is so beautiful that we always want to be getting away out of the streets into the fields, breaking through the farmer's hedges, finding a bird's nest or two, gathering an armful of cowslips or bluebells before regretfully catching the 'bus back to town. That is the perfect cockney's day and even before Isaak Walton, cockneys have been describing it delightfully. But though it is easier to write pleasantly about pleasant things, it is no easier to write well. To do that an author must write of things he knows, and next to the creatures of his imagination, he is likely to know the surroundings in which he was born and the people among whom he grew up. So if the English country is to be written of well and not pleasantly, it is likely to be by real countrymen, who are part of the community they describe. If they are true poets they will create their own country and people it with their own imaginary beings. Hardy is an example of this I think, and so is Theodore Powys —who peoples his Dorset village with figures of good and evil as abstract as the characters in *Pilgrim's Progress*. From neither of these must we expect realism. Real pictures of English country and English country people are rare: Richard Jefferies in *Amaryllis at the Fair* is the one to which I turn back again and again with most pleasure.

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Mr. H. J. Massingham, who has edited *English Country* (Wishart, 7*s*. 6*d*.), planned to make the book a collection of essays about various parts of England by writers who knew them intimately. But the supply of truly local talent was apparently not always to be discovered: few of the contributors here are not Londoners first and countrymen afterwards. Mr. Walpole who writes, as one would expect of Lakeland, is well aware of this difficulty, and begins with an apology:

> If I had ever been given a chance like one of Maeterlinck's unborn children, I should have settled on a spot not a few yards from where I am writing this. But I was not. I was born in New Zealand and, leaving it at the age of five, have never since been able to write of it with authority. Hardy of Wessex, Quiller-Couch of Cornwall, Constance Holme of Westmorland—*these* were the lucky ones!

Yet though Mr. Walpole makes one laugh at such pretended advantages of birth, there is no doubt that the best essays in this book are those on " The Ouse and the Nen," by H. E. Bates, on " Mr. Newcome at Harsenham " by R. H. Mottram, and on " The Suffolk Stour " by Adrian Bell. They are far superior to the visitors and literary hermits who have settled in some corner to make it their own. Bates, who was born and brought up at Rushton, a town devoted to bootmaking on the Nen, describes his grandfather who went out of bootmaking just as it was ceasing to be a work-shop industry and becoming a business of factory mass-production. Like the older generation of bootmakers, he was more than half a countryman, and he took up farming. Thereafter his life was happy, and in his high-wheeled dog-cart he often drove his grandson over the low watershed that divides the industrialised Nen from the fatter sleepier Ouse:

> We used to speak of Kimbolton then as we might speak now of Peking, of something vague and immensely far-distant, a strange town in a strange country. . . . Thus, as soon as we crossed the Bedfordshire border we were in another world, a world of woods with carefully shorn green sidings, of great mansions hidden behind great trees in great parks, of lanes of honeysuckle and hazel, of many flowers of whose existence I had not dreamed. In the sparse Nen copses the primroses are late, even where there are primroses at all, but in the Ouse woods, on the sheltered slopes, they hardly wait for spring.

And in the contrast he gives of the ugly jumped-up little towns and the soft sleepy country he gets a picture which is not merely locally accurate but which might well stand for the whole of England.

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Mr. Mottram says that it was the people of Harsenham who constrained him to go there. He describes a small farmer in this Norfolk village and one learns of the landscape, one deduces it from the man. To some extent it is a self-portrait, for though Mr. Mottram is not actually an East Anglian farmer like Mr. Adrian Bell, he ought to be. He understands perfectly what he calls " the unlettered, one might almost say the anti-lettered mind." And he understands farming also:

> The old agricultural community to which Harsenham had, a few years ago, reverted, was entirely self-supporting. You cannot regulate its small farming by the light of reason. The animals feed off that farm and yield labour and manure, hide and horn.

This economic understanding of Mr. Mottram and Mr. Bell enables them to give a much truer picture than Miss Sackville-West, who says of the English hedge:

> The Kentish yeoman is a proud, suspicious and independent fellow. The idea of not having a hedge, and a good thick one, between his own and his neighbour's land, would be inconceivable to him. It would be no use explaining that his colleagues across the Channel manage quite well without . . . the Kentish yeoman is somehow not temperamentally adapted to communal co-operation.

Actually, of course, Kent is a fine grass country and the hedges enable far more beasts to be kept per acre than in lands were the animals have to be continually herded and watched to prevent their straying. It is only where there are wide stretches of arable land that the hedge is uneconomic and in such districts it is rapidly vanishing.

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The other writers show as much of themselves as the country they write about. Mr. Ellis Roberts loves Dorset for the names of the villages, and in gloating over Ower Moigne is blind to the fact that it is a horrid place, but he omits from the " bede-roll of Dorset names " Scratchy, the most beautiful solitary and almost inaccessible beach below the cliffs where one can sometimes see choughs.

Mr. John Collier rejoices in living where game is preserved, where there are:

> No footpaths marked for the guidance of Mr. Joad and his hikers, no accommodation in the inns, no few acres to be sold to the poultry farmer. I wish all England were like this. . . . I hereby declare that I know very few pleasures so keen, so exquisite, so unalloyed by remorse, so blithe with that inspiration of duty, as passing the day with ferrets, terriers, lurchers, sticks and guns, in killing the multitudinous and unlovely rat.

But how one wonders did Mr. Collier succeed in entering this earthly paradise?

Mr. Blunden's essay on Sussex seems to me frankly bad, as do the photographs which precede each essay and tell us nothing. Yet we all love the English country, for as Mr. Davies says in his direct and simple way:

> All my own interest goes into living forms of beauty. I would rather see a fine tree than a fine tower; and the old house with five or six gables is nothing to me, if I can only see two swans on a dark lake, or one white horse on the hillside.

That is probably the real reason why there are too many daffodils in English literature. We shall go on writing about them when we can only grow them in window boxes and taking all our pleasure in the country long after it has ceased to exist.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

The Dreamer. By JULIAN GREEN. Translated by VYVYAN HOLLAND. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

At Sea. By ARTHUR CALDER-MARSHALL. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.

Lean Men. By RALPH BATES. *Davies.* 8s. 6d.

Moss Rose. By JOSEPH SHEARING. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

Elizabeth. By FRANK SWINNERTON. *Hutchinson.* 7s. 6d.

Since Gérard de Nerval wrote of the daimon that animates apparently inanimate objects—of the eye that may be discerned peering forth from the crevices of some blind and ancient wall—an appreciation of the fantastic has played a very important part in French *avant-garde* literature. Thus, the Surréalistes make Lautréamont their god; to them the world of the unconscious, the realm of dreams and phantasms, is a more interesting and fruitful territory than the solid three-dimensional universe in which we live and breathe. M. Julian Green is not a member of the Surréaliste group; but he, too, is more concerned with dreams than with realities, for among dreams he finds a reality transcending that of our humdrum everyday existence. His method is both naturalistic and phantasmagoric; trivial characters, closely and patiently observed, yield up the secret of a fantastic private history; nothing is what it seems; the dullest and staidest man walks accompanied by a beckoning and mocking familiar; and behind the shuttered house-fronts of a small French provincial town, in its streets and squares, its alley-ways and its closed gardens, strange tragedies are perpetually being enacted.

Obsession in his books takes the place of passion. Whereas passion is often mercurial and lively, obsession is fixed, saturnine, immovable; and characteristic of the stories he unfolds is the morbid fixity with which men and women concentrate on some single dominant idea. The *idée fixe* varies from novel to novel. Now it is avarice, now jealousy, now unexpressed and baffled love—the love of a middle-aged virgin for the doctor whom she does not know and to whom she never speaks. *The Dreamer*, M. Green's latest novel, is a less satisfactory and dramatic production than that memorable book *The Closed Garden*; but it has a queer beauty that makes up for a somewhat incoherent and disconnected theme. The dreamer himself, an unhappy and uncomely youth, who lodges with his aunt and with a little cousin whom he adores, is the victim of an obsession from which he can only escape by plunging into a dream-world, originally suggested by a childish game he and his cousin had once played. On drives through the country they had been accustomed to invent fantastic stories about the inhabitants of a neighbouring chateau, and the chateau becomes his spiritual refuge. In dreams he forgets the agony of living and the torments of unsatisfied desire.

Not a very cheerful or inspiriting subject. The narrative introduces us to three main characters—Manuel, the feverish and ugly adolescent; his aunt, who first tortures and afterwards—when illness has put him entirely in her power—idolises the weak-willed and unhappy youth; and his cousin, a self-conscious and unsympathetic little girl, who provokes but cannot soothe his awkward affection. The beauty of the story is in its treatment—in the atmosphere of the narrative, which might perhaps be compared to the atmosphere of an over-clouded and sultry summer day, just before a storm, when an odd yellowish light fills the landscape and the smallest details stand out unearthly and vivid. The book is carefully and harmoniously written; Mr. Holland's version is very good indeed, and he seems to have caught the accent of M. Green's prose and to be able to reproduce it without any of the clumsiness that attends so many English renderings from a foreign language. *The Dreamer* cannot be recommended as a bedside-volume, nor will it appeal to those critics who make "wholesomeness" their criterion of literary excellence; such readers will find it exasperating or positively alarming. That it may arouse some respectable persons to righteous fury is an indication of the novelist's uncommon skill.

By comparison, *At Sea* is almost straightforward. Mr. Calder-Marshall's previous novel, *About Levy*, was the portrait of a man who is standing his trial for murder, depicted through the eyes of a large number of different acquaintances. In his new book Mr. Calder-Marshall chooses a more restricted and slightly less ambitious field. On the first day of their honeymoon John and Elsa hire a boat and row out to sea, where John loses an oar, and their boat is caught and swept oceanwards by a treacherous current. They spend twenty-four hours of discomfort and peril. Mr. Calder-Marshall describes their response to the situation and, by means of long passages of "interior monologue," dove-tailed into the descriptive text, shows us how it affects their attitude to one another. John, knowing that the disaster was probably his fault, writhes under a sense of failure and personal weakness, which presently turns to hatred of his companion. Elsa rages inwardly, fiercely resents the blundering and selfish young man to whom she is married, till antagonism of a fiercer and more instinctive sort grows up in her mind. . . . These vicissitudes of feeling are recorded by Mr. Calder-Marshall with sensitiveness, intelligence and unusual dramatic verve. I am not sure that his employment of the "interior monologue," or his adaptation of the mannerisms of James Joyce, is quite as successful as the descriptive part of the story; but the impression made by the book is sharp and convincing. *At Sea* is better reading than the average novel, and may pave the way for a production of permanent value.

Mr. Ralph Bates is also a novelist worth watching. *At Sea*, however, is a distinct improvement on *About Levy*; whereas *Lean Men* is a considerably more difficult and less shapely work than *Sierra*, a delightful collection of short stories published by Mr. Bates some twelve months ago. The form of the short story seems to suit him best. *Lean Men* contains many admirable and moving passages; but the book is a trifle disjointed and, though seldom dull, much too overcrowded and voluminous. Again his subject is Catalonia; the protagonist, a young Englishman, returns to his old haunts in the Barcelona dockyards on a mission from the Communist Party and becomes involved in an armed rising against the present Republican regime. A long introductory chapter sketches various sentimental complications which he has left behind him in London; but the personal aspect of the story is the least impressive. Mr. Bates is an interesting and original story-teller; yet I doubt if his talent can be accommodated to a full-length novel.

With *Moss Rose* and *Elizabeth* we descend to earth. Neither book is unexpected; both are extremely competent, and in competence amply repay their readers for anything they may lack in boldness and originality of design. *Moss Rose* is an exciting and absorbing murder-story. Like Miss Elizabeth Jenkin's *Harriet*, Mr. Shearing's book is founded on a real murder, committed in the middle of the last century, and the novelist makes the most of his Victorian background—a tawdry music-hall and the cheap Bloomsbury lodging-house in which an "unfortunate female" was discovered by a fellow lodger with her throat cut from ear to ear. . . . *Elizabeth* is honest and readable, but not unduly stimulating. It tells of two young women, Eliza and Beth—Beth being prosperous and Eliza poor—who live in a growing seaside town, of their friendship and of the love-affair that eventually separates them. A sad tale and a long tale, tenderly handled. . . . But Mr. Swinnerton's prose-style is as gritty as asphalt.

PETER QUENNELL

TWO ANGLERS LOOK BACK

For Fishermen Only. By ATWOOD CLARK. *Philip Allan.* 10s. 6d.

A Holiday Fisherman. By MAURICE HEADLAM. *Christophers.* 10s. 6d.

The angling of the British Isles is swiftly on the down-grade. There are nothing like so many good waters as there were forty years ago; while of fish there are, probably, less than half as many. Reservoir construction and the tapping of water supplies under the chalk hills have caused serious shrinkages to scores of good streams, while devastating pollutions from factory, house, and tarred road have totally or partially destroyed the fish and insect life in hundreds of others. Even the ponds and canals have been unusually fouled. Two old, hard-bitten anglers and good naturalists, Mr. Atwood Clark and Mr. Maurice Headlam look back on the lavish beneficence of an unspoiled England, and in their books, *For Fishermen Only* and *A Holiday Fisherman*, tell of great catches of trout, salmon and coarse fish.

As regards the future, Mr. Maurice Headlam is the gloomier of the two:

> If fish are there! That will soon be far from a certainty in this crowded island of ours, unless fishermen realise the dangers and organise all possible powers—publicity, propaganda, appeal to those who are not fishermen, but who love the amenities of the country,

and finally the power of the vote—to prevent the pollution of our waters and the destruction of our fish.

Mr. Atwood Clark who is the older of the two, and caught his first trout in 1868, champions the flies as well as the fish :

> Looking back at my own times in the seventies and eighties, there is no recollection of any day on which some trout were not caught if tried for, excepting only when there chanced to be a flood, sheep-washing, or one of those blazing hot, close, thundery days when bird, beast and fish all become sleepily indifferent. Now, unfortunately, total failures are more frequent. There does not seem to be so much surface food about as there was when I first became interested in it. Mayflies are certainly fewer; also Olives, Sedges, big March Browns and early Blue Duns seem to be more sparse and fitful in their rises. Other flies also do not float down in such numbers as they used to. I wonder if it is due to the modern oiliness which, in greater or less degree, gets into most of our rivers, that is entirely responsible.

There is no doubt about it. Modern "oiliness," which relative to the countryside chiefly means petrol and road-tar, has done inconceivable damage to both fish and fly (and even to the vegetable life of streams). To the pre-war devastations of factory and sewage (which, of recent years, have greatly increased), have been added the insidious pollutions from the roads. British tar is, and has been, fatal; though, as Mr. Headlam points out, foreign bitumen can be treated so as to be rendered innocuous.

How glorious fishing was until fifty, forty, or even twenty years ago, these books excitingly bear witness. Neither of them is for fishermen only, although Mr. Atwood Clark pretends to be so exclusive. Of the two, Mr. Maurice Headlam's, though the more formless, is the more spacious, for he frequently wanders away from his angling, even so far as to give a graphic account of the first Irish Rebellion, of which he was an eye-witness. Both anglers, in their character of naturalists, speak a good word for the otter (a beautiful, poaching beast which many anglers denounce), though only Mr. Headlam gives a careful account of one that he watched. Pleasantest of all, neither angler is a dry-fly purist; and Mr. Clark who, like Mr. Headlam, has caught most of his trout with the dry-fly, seems to think that wet-fly fishing is the more difficult. That is undoubtedly true, for its successful use involves more knowledge of species as well as the habits of trout and fly. Nevertheless, Mr. Clark is sometimes less reliable than Mr. Headlam, who seems to have written nothing that can be questioned (save, indeed, the righteousness of the modern massacre methods of grouse-shooting). Mr. Clark revels in angling hyperbole, makes you laugh frequently, and takes an impish pleasure in exaggerating every coincidence. Occasionally, even when he is intent on being deadly, scientifically serious, he instigates a query. For instance, it is improbable that those trout of the Pyrenees rivers he used to fish sometimes were so mightily different from all others. He tells us that there seemed to be nothing, or very little, in those rivers, and then suddenly, after days of disappointment and despair, they woke to life, and yielded good baskets. But many north country mountain rivers, like the Wharfe and Tweed, are like that—especially the Wharfe. In another place he writes :

> I think that the reason for so many so-called short rises is that the fish has seen either the angler or his gear at the very last moment —just as the fly was about to be taken.

That, however, is not always true, for the up-stream wet-fly fisher, angling with the finest drawn gut in rough streams, knows that both himself and his line are generally invisible, and that rising trout do not take hold for one of three reasons : (1) Each of the angler's three flies is the wrong one. (2) There is little or no natural "fly" on the water, and so the suspicious trout rises to the artificial out of curiosity or fun, but with no intention of closing his mouth on it. (3) The trout are glutted with food and looking much too carefully at everything that floats over : result, only an inspection bite.

Mr. Clark is a first-grade salmon fisher, rather better, one gathers, than Mr. Headlam, who, however, is an excellent all-round angler, and champions the grayling as a fine sporting fish, of which Mr. Clark makes the strange mistake that it spawns in the summer (actually it spawns in the spring, and is fairly good game in August).

But criticism seems thankless and unfair, for Mr. Clark's book equally with Mr. Headlam's is one to recommend highly. In these days of wicked, godless vandalism, books of this kind are invaluable as missionary documents. Not only anglers (who are estimated in the British Isles at more than 300,000) but hosts of other people are interested in the preservation of clear streams and standing waters.

HERBERT PALMER

A BYZANTINE CHRIST

Jesus the Unknown. By DMITRI MEREZHKOVSKY. Translated from the Russian by H. CHROUSCHOFF MATHESON. With a Preface by the VERY REV. W. R. INGE. *Cape.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

In a brilliant and acute analysis of Christianity in his *Reason in Religion*, Professor Santayana traced the metamorphosis which the ideas of its Founder had undergone when translated into Western thought and belief. Needless to say, Paul began the process, and a great deal of what Europe takes to be Christianity is an imperfectly understood Paulinism, built from a war of selected texts in the religious strife of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Primitive Christian values of life and conduct were abandoned wholesale, war and wealth and success were glorified, the sins of sex condoned when not found out, or found only in high places, and mercilessly judged when lacking these sanctions. It would be easy to prolong the list of changes in the scales of morality and practice. But it is very certain that no such vision of the Christ as is contained in M. Merezhkovsky's strange book would have found a lodgment in the Western mind of any conceivable past, nor will it gain a ready patience in the present. Dean Inge, who breaks his rules to write a Preface to the book because of its "deep spirituality, originality and beauty," is drawn to it, spite of glaring defects, mainly because it presents a point of view, and we are grateful to him that he indicates it. The writer is a Russian, and the Dean thinks that the cultivated Russian mind—and these pages show real scholarship—is very near indeed, in intelligence and in streaks of wild fancifulness, to the mind of the Eastern Roman Provinces in the first Christian era.

At all events, we are equally far away here from the facile romanticism of Renan, the flowery loquacity of Farrar, the respectable sobriety of Seeley—"Jesus Christ was not a Victorian Englishman"—and the painstaking plodding of Edersheim. The question is : What are we face to face with in these hurried, gasping, repetitive paragraphs, which are so obviously eager to express a conception, a faith, a challenge? Whatever their message, Santayana and the Dean are at one. This Christ, this Christianity, are not in the least European. Nor will they make appeal to any ordinary consciousness, not even one sincerely and devoutly after the distant truth of things. There are real flashes of light, distorted or coloured by fancy and legend, but reality, or what we apprehend as reality, seems to have equal weight with the author as some jargon from the apocryphal gospels, or some stray element of disinterred tradition, with tattered grave-clothes around it, or some prevailing conviction of his own, such as the Russian hatred and yet consciousness of sex, or—and this is constant—the note of "terror" and of approaching doom. "Rex tremendae majestatis," he quotes the line of the "Dies Irae" again and again; and we are not surprised that, after weird references, under symbols of Fish and Dove, to the story of the fate of Atlantis, which he entirely accepts, he loves uncompromisingly and best the Ikon Byzantine portraiture of Christ.

It is extraordinarily hard to indicate the actual value of M. Merezhkovsky's work. A certain definite value it has. It is at least to the good that we are not presented with the portrait of a pious mystic, vaguely "meek and gentle," whose rapier-like sayings and magnificent rhetoric have all been blunted when not conventionalised or disregarded; and whose marvellous scheme of conduct, as the Synoptics record it, has been disguised under a sedulous dressing up of topographical detail. We have here, as has been said, a point of view, and a most Byzantine view at that. For the Byzantines, with imperial Caesar to regulate their faith for them, were always prone to picture Christ as Judge, and as menacing Judge. It is hard for the human mind to reconcile the pitiless Judge and the pitiful Saviour. There is much of the Judge, and very little of the Saviour, in many of these pages. But it is harder for the mind to conceive of God as incarnate. And here we think M. Merezhkovsky only gets us as far as to recognise that "a god has mingled with the game." His Christ fails because, spite of almost blinding flashes here and there, He is neither God nor Man, but a confusion of natures. The mystery will never be solved, of course, by Council or Creed, but it need not be restated in terms of heresy. Indeed, there are hints, now and then, of a second and condemned theory—that the Spirit is the Mother of Christ. And yet—we may have mistaken the writer. For he gives us a painfully sentimental account of the Annunciation; and again, with undue emphasis, as we think, and the vigour of Oriental imagery, he depicts Christ, in manhood, as

"hating" His Mother, and His brothers, and John the Baptist (very strikingly portrayed) "hates" Him, too. As a born priest who has abjured his priesthood, it seems that he must do so. In fact, there is far too much of "hatred" and of the incessant note of "terror" in the book.

But it is possible to see through it all; as we are convinced M. Mereszhkovsky, when not convulsed by an access of exaggerated Oriental legend, sees too. He has not constructed for us a real Christ; no, not even a realistic Christ. Who, indeed, shall accomplish the feat of revealing to us "the divine mystic of the Galilean hills," as Mr. Joseph Chamberlain once rather surprisingly named Him? But he has saved us from certain cheap portraits, "best-sellers," as the cant phrase goes. If his Christ is repellent, provocative, at least He makes us think afresh. We easy-going Westerners have possibly omitted certain salient elements in that amazing and insistent procession to Calvary. After all, we have our inevitable share in it. "If we do not believe in Christ, at all events we must suffer with Him." And for one reiterated hint we thank M. Mereszhkovsky. It is, briefly, this.

The accounts of Christ's person differ in an astonishing way. "Like unto all the sons of Adam"; that is one. "Fairer than the children of men," is another. "His visage more marred than any man's," is a third. There is a strange and significant old legend that one man in a Galilean fishing-boat saw a strong, comely young man hailing from the shore; another in the same boat saw only a withered old man. It is on evidence that He impressed Caiaphas and Pilate, and yet was a suitable subject of mockery for Antipas. He could awe hostile crowds; yet it was necessary for Judas to betray Him from amongst a little band of cowering disciples by the sign of a kiss. Years afterwards He was named by a poet as "groom for each bride." And the soul is the bride.

This book, then, is worth study. The Western "soul" may find no response to it. But the Western mind has not been of late in such trim as to find response. Things suggestive, things childish, things completely alien, crowd upon each other. The wise man must make his choice.

We have to thank Mrs. Matheson for the best of translations. Quotations from the Gospels are given in the Authorised Version, a boon, and a steadying one. Notes are given in the new fashion, at the end of the volume. We still crave for the old "foot-note."

W. K. FLEMING

PROFESSOR LEGOUIS

A Short History of English Literature. By EMILE LEGOUIS. *Oxford.* 6*s.*

This book is intended for the use of schools; it is "a stepping-stone to the larger *History of English Literature*" by the author and Prof. Cazamian. Prof. Legouis declares himself "fully conscious of a sort of presumption in writing a book for the schools of English-speaking countries"—but "after all, it may be inspiriting to them to be made early aware that their pride in their own writers is confirmed by critics from other lands." I doubt if enthusiasm for one's native writers really needs to be thus bolstered up by foreign approval: but why make excuses? In books like this, meant for the young, one thing is needful—that they should attract the young: no matter who writes them, or how many blunders—in one's judgment—they include.

It is important to remember that, for the more one has read the harder it is to be sensible about such a book. Far from approaching a "universal standard," one seems to get every day more like the Antiquary, who "seldom agreed with any person in the immediate proposition which was laid down." And the impulse on meeting a new history of literature is to turn first to those names about which, for one reason or another, one feels strongly: so, of course, one is kept in a fervour of indignation, for even if the right things are praised they so seldom appear to be praised right. In a very short history, indeed, they hardly can be praised right. All Prof. Legouis has to say about Mrs. Inchbald's novels is that "more discreetly" (than Godwin) she "attacked social conventions": all he has to say about *The Story of an African Farm* is that it is "a variety of the same type" as Sir James Barrie's novels—because it is colonial, and they are stories of provincial life! It is hard to retain a belief in his sensibility when he can dismiss *Rasselas* as merely doughy, and praise George Eliot, even too much, without ever mentioning *Silas Marner*. And so on. Why pile up grievances?

His style, too, is curiously unalert. Sir Roger de Coverley's reflections, he points out, "are usually naive and indicate feeble powers of reasoning"—a piece of analysis which reminds one of Mrs. Barbauld's comment on the *Ancient Mariner* (she said the story was improbable). True, he is writing for schools: but is not that in the worst class-room tradition? Of Cowper he says: "His refined sensibility told him that joy and suffering are the lot of all men": of Dickens that "he began, though he was hardly aware of it, in the picaresque manner": of De Quincey's style that "it would be verbose declamation but for the majesty of the visions . . . and for the incomparable volume of his reverberating organ-notes." (A narrow squeak! Sir Roger's ancestor, it will be remembered, would have been killed at Worcester but for being sent out of the field the day before.)

Intelligent schoolboys seldom overlook remarks like that—but they would be trifles. Prof. Legouis lacks the one thing needful—that ardour that merges somehow with the object of it, that is still aglow with the thing it attempts to describe. Such an impression of immediate contact may not be, in itself, the ideal of all criticism: the ideal introduction to literature it certainly is. No critic gives the young a better start, for instance, than Saintsbury. But Prof. Legouis comes quite cool to his task, so he will kindle no one, and his blunders are uncompensated. Partly, the book is too short. In his part of the longer *History* there was real substance: as a rule he would tell the story of the play, or poem, which brings one a step towards the thing itself, and may inspire eagerness to be acquainted with it. In abridgment most of these links with reality have had to go. The long work would not have done for schools, of course: Prof. Cazamian's highly generalised, analytical method, quite detached from the object, puts that out of the question. But it is a great pity Prof. Legouis has condensed so much.

A feature of the book, I suppose national, is the recurring idea that such-and-such writers would have been much greater if they had had "a more exacting art." This seems to me really equivalent to the notion that every writer can and should work in the same way—in a word, nonsense. I should like to take as a result of foreignness the inability, marked in both these histories, to distinguish the second-rate: but too many native critics seem to share it.

K. JOHN

ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL

The History of St. Thomas's Hospital. Vol. II. By F. G. PARSONS. *Methuen.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The knowledge of history which is acquired from school history books often leads us to suppose that the vicissitudes of kings and queens, statesmen and generals were the happenings that influenced most strongly the lives of contemporary people. The history of a civil institution through the ages shows an entirely different side of the picture. Professor Parsons, with the exquisite care and skill of an anatomist, traces a course of events which were directly connected with the growth and development of St. Thomas's Hospital. Under all kinds of government there were those who needed medical aid, and funds had to be found to provide treatment for the poor. The stability of the institution, even during times of political turmoil, is attributable to these constant human necessities.

The present volume covers the two centuries between 1600 and 1800 and, though the characters met with are almost too like ourselves to amuse or please us as their forerunners did in the earlier volume, the historical facts are definite. Among the names which excite our attention in the early part of the seventeenth century is that of Mr. James Molins, who was a flourishing surgeon: he appears to have been very adept in cutting for the stone. He expected to receive fees for his work at the hospital and the following minute is recorded concerning an appointment which eventually fell to him. "On October 4th, 1622, 'A treaty was held by the treasurer and some of the governors of this hospital and of St. Bartholomew's with regard to a chirurgeon to be chosen and agreed withall for the cutting of such poore people as are or shall be grieved by the stone, incurable otherwise than by cutting.'"

Not everybody knows that the original site of St. Thomas's Hospital adjoined the present Guy's Hospital building. Thomas Guy, who conceived the idea of building the hospital which bears his name, made a lot of money, partly as a bookseller and partly by speculation. Perhaps his conscience smote him: at any rate, in 1721, he proposed to build a hospital for incurables shortly after the collapse of the South Sea Stock which he had bought at

120 and sold at prices varying from 300 to 600. It must have been a source of bitterness to him that the stock reached 1,050 before the crash. The young hospital grew up as a kind of daughter institution within the precincts of St. Thomas's Hospital; it was, of course, not until 1862 that the original site was sold and in 1871 the present hospital, opposite Westminster Bridge, was opened.

The story of St. Thomas's during the latter part of the eighteenth century is dominated by the figure of Cheselden, whose contributions to surgery were considerable. We find mention also of a certain Dr. Fordyce, a physician of whom St. Thomas's has little to be proud. He was a coarse man, a bad lecturer and got drunk every evening. It is recorded of him that "one night, after dinner, he was called to the bedside of a titled lady, and, *ebriolus* if not *ebrius*, obeyed the summons. After solemnly listening to a train of unusual symptoms he tried to count her pulse but found it beyond his powers; and, realising his condition, he muttered to himself: 'Drunk, by G . . .' and prescribed a mild 'placebo.' Next morning she sent for him again and admitted that his diagnosis was correct since very occasionally she was the worse for stimulants."

The book is extremely well produced and well illustrated.

AFTER STRINDBERG

Modern Swedish Short Stories. *Cape.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Swedish literature, for most of us, begins and ends with Strindberg. He is so complete and individual a figure that we accept him without inquiring where he has sprung from; it seems obvious that he is the exception, from whom little can be learnt of the life and literature of his country. But quite possibly, in our ignorance of that country, we may be wrong. There are the novels of middle class and Bohemian life, the peasant stories, the historical plays—all of them native to Sweden. The most important years of his life as an artist were spent, it is true, in exile; but he returned home, established his *théâtre intime* in Stockholm, and was already a national figure during his lifetime. To some extent his isolation has been exaggerated. We know his place in European literature, but not in the literature of his own country. He was deeply influenced by Swedenborg, for example, and probably also by other writers nearer his own time of whom we know nothing. Seen in true perspective, Strindberg might appear rather different from the usual conception of him.

In his introduction to the volume of *Modern Swedish Short Stories*, issued by the Anglo-Swedish Literary Foundation, Mr. Olle Holmberg refers to a "purely Swedish" Strindberg who has had a great influence on recent Swedish literature. Two of Strindberg's peasant tales are followed by a selection of stories from some twenty-five authors varying in date between 1894 and 1932. It is the calm after the storm. Strindberg's influence is not at all obvious to the English reader. We are left to guess at the qualities of a "purely Swedish" Strindberg, and to discover his influence in the realism and prose of common speech which are characteristic of most of these stories. The general effect of Naturalism is evident, and no doubt this is due chiefly to Strindberg; but he is not the writer of one movement—symbolism, for example, and expressionism are equally important in his work—so that one might have expected to find a more startling legacy than is apparent here. Mr. Holmberg does not go into detail. He appends labels to some of the writers whose work is included—"impressionism," "realism," and so on—but he is not very enlightening. It will be best perhaps to enjoy the book for what it is—a good collection of stories, which have their definite flavour and nationality.

They seem to be the product of a single tradition. Sweden is still largely a country of peasants, and the cities do not seem to have insulated a race of their own. At any rate, town mouse and country mouse meet here on level ground. Irony shades into slyness, humour is met by simpleness—and it is not always easy to tell which is which. The date, too, of the various stories has small importance; "pre-war" and "post-war" do not mark a dividing line; nor is there the conscious revival, or defiance, of a lapsed tradition. One suspects the influence of Villiers de l'Isle Adam in a story dated 1929; another story (1932) has machinery as its theme, but it is a poetic fantasy which might have been written in Russia forty years before the revolution. Remote from European currents, the whole book has a homogeneity and freshness which are delightful to encounter.

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There are no masterpieces, but the level of achievement is high, and from these hundred or so stories the reader gets a vivid picture of Swedish character and landscape.

The short story, we are told, has never been practised as a separate art in Sweden: most of the writers included here are primarily novelists, dramatists and poets. Strindberg, Selma Lagerlöf, Heidenstam, and others whose names are less familiar, contribute a few pieces which, though outstanding, are hardly representative of their art. On the other hand, Hjalmar Söderberg (b. 1869), Hjalmar Bergman (1883–1931), and Pär Lagerkvist (no date given) are obviously capable of using the short-story form with individuality and charm.

Altogether, though, one reads this volume less for the stories than for the country behind them. G. W. STONIER

ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

The Nemesis of Economic Nationalism. By JOSEPH JOHNSTON. *King.* 4s. 6d.

The productivity of modern technique makes possible an increase of wealth for all the inhabitants of the world if they can operate a world economy. But this requires an international State for the due control of finance and commerce. Since this international State seems impracticable in consequence of the fears, suspicions, jealousies and hates which nations entertain, the actual economic movement is towards an isolated economic nationalism.

The complicated folly of this procedure is a proper subject for the fused wit and logic of an Irish economist like Mr. Johnston. Though the economic war between Great Britain and the Irish Free State, in which Mr. Thomas and Mr. de Valera compete in damaging their respective countries, furnishes the chief example of economic nationalism, Mr. Johnston shows a full and exact knowledge of the play of this insanity in other countries and distinguishes the cases where economic nationalism is practicable at a certain price from those where it is sheer suicide. Where agriculture is a chief industry, as in Ireland and America, the problem of the restoration of a trade balance between agricultural and industrial home products on a fair basis confronts the State planners, for Mr. Johnston considers it self-evident that *laisser faire* is dead.

The self-sufficient nationalism in the post-war period seemed natural and even necessary in view of a possible recurrence of the war. It was not until the battle of the currencies for the possession of export markets began that the sheer lunacy of nationalism became manifest.

> The *reductio ad absurdum* of this method would be to reduce one's national currency to zero in terms of foreign currencies, and capture 100 per cent. of the world's trade, which by that time would be zero also!

Mr. Johnston brings much acute criticism to bear upon the obstinate economists whose obsolete ideas block the way to recovery even along nationalist lines. So long as internationalism remains impracticable the State must take a hand in curing the diseases which private enterprise with its maldistribution of consuming power continues to breed. The State must utilise for productive purposes the idle capital which is withheld from private enterprise. The hesitation boldly to apply this policy everywhere blocks recovery. And yet it should be self-evident that whereas one or a few firms cannot safely improve their plant and enlarge their output by borrowing idle capital, because they have no reason for expecting that the increased wages they pay out will bring a proportionate increase of demand for their goods, this reasoning does not apply to well-directed public works operated on a scale sufficient to stimulate a general increase of demand. This is the sufficient answer to those who say, on the one hand, that public works are more costly than private, and who refuse, on the other, to distinguish public expenditure of a reproductive character from that which evokes no corresponding assets.

"If you insist upon playing the foolish game of economic nationalism, I will tell you what are the best rules for you to adopt . . ." says Mr. Johnston, in this bright and well-reasoned little book. J. A. H.

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SHOVEHA'PENNY

Shoveha'penny. By TRELAWNEY DAYRELL-REID. *Christophers.* 2s. 6d.

Mr. Dayrell-Reid has written an amusing little treatise, in eighteenth-century style, on the game of shoveha'penny. He takes us into an Inn where the board, the players, the onlookers are assembled, and if the atmosphere of Toby jugs and uncle Tobys is rather overstressed, there is a real whiff of the tap-room in the landlord's "Come on, my bloody uncles," a quarter of an hour after closing time. The game itself is vividly described. Mr. Dayrell-Reid lays down the law on most points; he prefers a board of unvarnished walnut or mahogany, occasionally bathed in petrol and rubbed with a paraffin rag; his favourite tactic is to score quickly in as many beds as possible and rattle his more orderly opponent. A list of rules is appended, and the enthusiastic shoveha'penny player will find advice as well as anecdote. The chapter on terms peculiar to the game is rich in slang; "corporals," "serjeant-majors," "horses and carts," "Nellie's bed," and "beer street" will be familiar to anyone who has played the game in country districts. Similar expressions, homely and military, are common to the London pub; but one may add to Mr. Dayrell-Reid's list a "full house," "Newmarket" (a variation in which the player retrieves the coins that have scored), and "a light in every window" (score in every bed). A little more, perhaps, might have been made of the history of the game, which, in its earlier form of shovel-board or shove-groat, can be traced back to the fifteenth century. In the *Privy Purse Expenses* (1532) of Henry VIII, we find this entry: "Paid to my lorde of Wiltshire for that he wonne of the King's Grace at two times at Shovelleaboarde xxxvs. VId. in Angells." But the old shovel-board was rather different from the shoveha'penny which is played nowadays. It is described thus in the Oxford Dictionary:

> *Shovel-board, shuffle-board.* A game in which a coin or other disk is driven by a blow with the hand along a highly polished board, floor or table (sometimes ten yards or more long) marked with transverse lines.

Farther on, we learn that "the game is out of use in England, but is still played in the U.S." And it is no good our looking under "shoveha'penny" for better information, because the word does not occur in the Oxford Dictionary!

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SHORTER NOTICES

Belmonte the Matador. By HENRY BAERLEIN. *Thornton Butterworth.* 10s. 6d.

It is a little unfortunate that Mr. Baerlein's biography should come so soon after *Death in the Afternoon*. The diffuseness and incoherence of the book make a sad contrast to the splendid economy and terseness of Hemingway. The author, too, unlike Hemingway, seems to have been caught in two minds about what his subject was to be—Bull-fighting or Belmonte (for the two are not, as some *aficionados* affirm, inseparable). After reading this life it was disappointing to feel that, in a few passages scattered here and there, Hemingway has given a far clearer interpretation of Belmonte and his art than has Mr. Baerlein in a whole book. But these disappointments once overcome there is much to interest the enthusiast and the novice. The author, dealing with the phraseology of a bull-fight, while never being so full as Hemingway, is a very sufficient guide to the more obvious passes. The background to the book is very definitely Spanish, and the anecdotes of Belmonte and his troupe authentic. Most important of all, the author's heart is in the right place: for he realises that bull-fighting is not a sport, but an art in which the bodies of the matador and bull create an aesthetic that, at its best, is entirely satisfactory.

Behind the Throne. By PAUL EMDEN. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 15s.

Discretion being the foremost characteristic of a good private secretary it necessarily follows that Mr. Emden's studies of the private secretaries of our sovereigns from Victoria to George V. are punctuated with silences that can be felt; and it says much for his skill that these biographies in brief are as readable and informative as they are. From the material at his disposal Mr. Emden is able to demonstrate both the difficulties by which the sovereign's secretary is faced, and the admirable way in which an unbroken line of able and honourable men has overcome them. One story he tells reveals the complete self-effacement that was constant. On one occasion it was questioned whether Lord Stamfordham was really the right man to advise the King without being prejudiced by his Tory leanings. One of the Liberal leaders replied to the doubter: "You can rule out that possibility. It is as unthinkable that Arthur Bigge should cheat at this game as that Arthur Balfour should cheat at cards." Although Mr. Emden is mainly concerned with the monarch's secretaries from General Grey to Lord Stamfordham, he treats also of the men who from other official or semi-official positions were the private advisers of the sovereigns, and his opening chapters in which he discusses the position of Stockmar is one of the best in the book. He concludes with brief sketches of the more notable of Prime Ministers' Secretaries, prominent among them being that of Montagu Corry. The book is well illustrated with portraits and with Vanity Fair caricatures.

Sermons by Artists. *Golden Cockerel Press.* 21s.

The origin of this book of essays is described in the preface. "As a polite reply to a society of parson painters who exhibit their work annually in Bond St., ten artists, prominent as sculptors, illustrators, painters or cartoonists, have been persuaded to take a text out of Holy Scripture and to write thereon a sermon expressive of their attitude to life." This task has been faithfully carried out by the artists to whom it was entrusted—Paul Nash, David Low, Robert Gibbings, Eric Kennington, Leon Underwood, Stanley Spencer, Edmund Sullivan, Roger Fry, Will Dyson, Percy Smith. One is almost tempted to suggest, however, that if this collective reply had been less polite, not to say downright dull, it might have made more instructive and entertaining reading. The following quotation from the piece by Mr. David Low, may be taken as a fair average sample of the whole. "Religion is necessary to man, both as a consolation to his soul and also as a standard of moral measurement; but the value as a moral yard-stick of a religion is doubtful when the ethics have been vitiated, even from the best intentions; it may even be stultifying when for some supposed good it approves where it should not approve, or withholds condemnation where it should condemn." The book is set up in admirable type designed by Eric Gill, and contains decorations by Elizabeth Corsellis.

The Native's Return. By LOUIS ADAMIC. *Gollancz.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Adamic, at fourteen, left his native village in Carniola for the United States; and absorbed so rapidly and completely the culture of his adopted country, that at the age of thirty-three, an American writer, writing on American subjects for American readers, and married to an American wife, he had almost lost touch with his own people, and completely with the Slovenic scene which had been the background of his childhood. In this book, he tells us how a Guggenheim Fellowship took him to Europe, and how—mainly, it seems, at his wife's instigation—he visited his old home. A small Austrian province when he left, a small province of post-war Yugoslavia when he returned, nothing was changed, save that one tyranny had been exchanged for another, and that times were harder. There is a rare beauty in the descriptions of the kindly, cheerful Slovenic farmers, with their closeness to nature tempered by their almost Scottish reverence for learning. Here, as elsewhere in the country, the writer from America was welcomed as a celebrity. But it is not the ceremonial visits and travelling episodes that give its charm to the book, but the beautiful and moving accounts of family life with which the book opens.

Britain's Folly: The Lesson of Ceylon. By J. G. WALL. With a Foreword by VISCOUNT ROTHERMERE. *Hurst and Blackett.* 5s.

The wish has been father of the thought and the book. The process is extremely simple and unconcealed. Self-government is going to be given to India: Lord Rothermere and Mr. Wall do not want self-government to be given to India; self-government has been given to Ceylon; therefore, if self-government in Ceylon has been "a manifest and complete failure," there is a good argument against self-government being given to India; therefore, as the jacket of this book announces, self-government in Ceylon has been "a manifest and complete failure." The inside of the book is presumably supposed to prove the statement on the jacket. It does nothing of the sort. The reason is that Mr. Wall, being an honest man, records facts and the fact being that the constitution given to Ceylon two years ago is not at all a failure and works rather well, Mr. Wall is unable to confirm Lord Rothermere's statement. He is so hard put to it to make a case against the new State Council that he blames them for not remedying in two years the "canker" in the headman system, apparently forgetting that the autocratic government of the Civil Service, to which Lord Rothermere wishes to return, failed to remedy the "canker" in their one hundred years of power. Ceylon's new constitution is not perfect, but if any one desires to learn how effectively it is working, he should read an article which appeared in the *Times* of June 16th last.

Week-end Competitions

No. 233

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As sprinter weds her wings again
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RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, September 7.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The results of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION 231

Set by Gerald Barry

You are confronted in your house by a "wanted" gangster. You know that he has already shot a member of your household and he threatens your own life, but offers to spare you and leave immediately, if you will give him your word of honour not to put the police on his track.

(*a*) Would you give your word?
(*b*) Would you keep it?

We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Quinea for the best answers, with reasons, in not more than 150 words.

Report by Gerald Barry

The problem was suggested by the predicament of Colonel Fey, who, on the day of the Nazi Putsch in Vienna, gave his word—knowing his colleague Dollfuss had been murdered—that the murderers should be given safe conduct to the frontier, and thereafter broke it and had them arrested.

Statistically, the majority of entrants for this competition are a dishonourable lot. Not counting the facetious few who assume that the gangster's victim is an aunt or other relative whose death is an agreeable event, or those whose honour appears to be so firmly rooted in dishonour that subterfuge makes them nimbly non-commital, at least two-thirds of competitors are firmly in favour of giving their word and breaking it with all possible speed. Justification springs from many sources.

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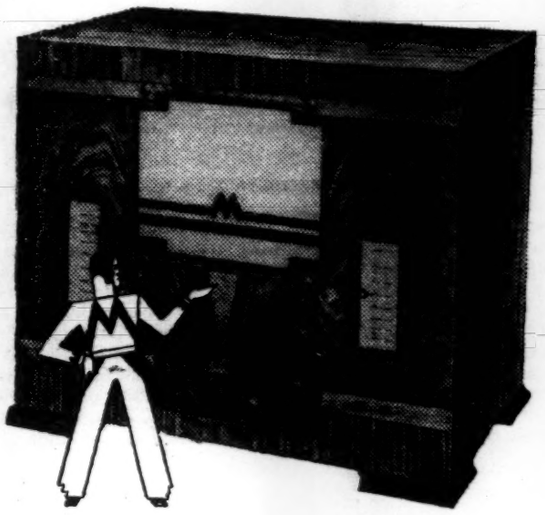

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☛ *BERLIN DIARIES was recently published in Czechoslovakia, France and America and there is ground for the belief that some of the prominent Germans executed during the June "round-up" were shot because of their supposed authorship or part authorship of this book.*

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LIBRARY REVIEW, COATBRIDGE, SCOTLAND

There is a general conviction that the individual's duty as a citizen transcends his duty to his own integrity. Richard Usborne quotes Kant as fitting exactly: "So act that the principal of your action may be capable of becoming a universal law." Several appeal to Socrates and to Shakespeare. Others advance the legal plea of "duress," and some the responsibility of dependants. No-one is high-minded enough to pretend that their own skin would not be their first consideration.

I have found it very difficult to award a prize. The effort of moral decision evidently checks eloquence. I like Muriel Bailey's suggestion that "such a credulous gangster should be placed under restraint as a subversive influence on all good crime films," and I am touched by the trusting competitor who would give her word—and keep it—because she would "have confidence in her appeal to the gangster to put an end to his crime."

My own solution will remain undisclosed. In awarding first prize to Sennacherib (will he please send his address?), and second to T. E. Casson, I must not be taken as necessarily agreeing with either of their decisions. The awards are for well reasoned and well written answers.

FIRST PRIZE

Should I give the promise? Yes. My death would profit nobody except possibly the gangster, who is free to decide on his course of action for himself. On the contrary, it would add a further stain to his already darkened conscience.

Should I keep the promise? No. Neither legally nor morally am I under an obligation. Common Law and Catholic Church join in repudiating a promise obtained under constraint. Codes of honour are designed for society's protection, but I should protect society better by breaking my word than by keeping it; for society rightly considers that murderers who propound ethical problems must not remain at large.

Yes, these are excellent reasons. I approve them. My fingers would not falter long before they dialled "Police." But all the same, I do not think that I should put on the Old School Tie until a decent period had passed by.

SECOND PRIZE

This problem was long ago decided by the professional casuists, like Socrates. You need not speak the truth to the gangster, nor keep your word with him; because he is an outlaw, outside the protection of the law and the conventions of society. Give him your word not to put the police on his track, and then break it.

This is the Greek theory. But it is not the Gothic instinct. *Pace* Socrates, if you give him your word of honour, you are bound to keep it. Moreover, it is the price you have set on your life; and you must pay it.

The plain and indomitable man will, however, do neither. He will simply take the gangster by the scruff of the neck, and hand him over to the police himself. Otherwise, if he lets him go, he is legally an accomplice to murder.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 88.—THE NEURASTHENIC

About two years ago the S.S. *Neurasthenic* mysteriously foundered in the North Pacific. Foul play was suspected. In the absence of survivors, however, the only evidence is a message washed ashore near Honolulu. The message runs as follows:

"Lat. 28.46 N, Long. 138.49 E.

SNESC	OUGTS
ENUMN	UHUIN
MISIR	CKSTR
ABTDS	YS1TA

9HU32"

Decode the message.

PROBLEM 85.—THE LOTTERY TICKETS

PROBLEM 86.—FARMER NUMERO

Solutions of these two problems will appear next week.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

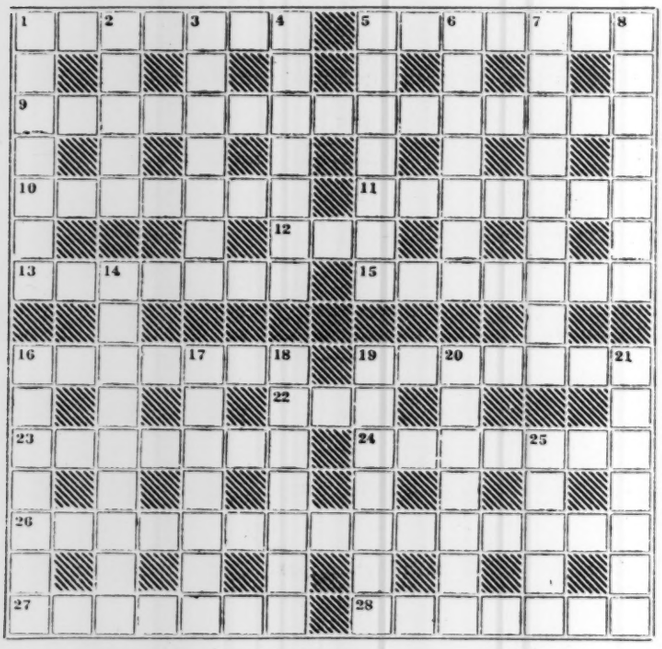
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize, consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 234

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday.



Set by L.-S

The winner of last week's crossword is
Kathleen Hayward, 56 Neale Close, Hampstead Garden Suburb, N.2.

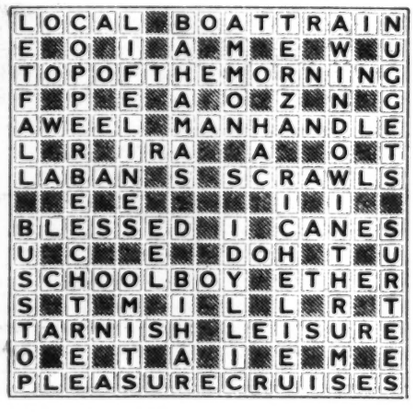
ACROSS

1. A flighty mount.
5. One of the things the walrus talked of.
9. 22 and 26. "They flourish at home in my own country."
10. The guts of the matter, so to speak.
11. My first is usually my second, my whole is unfortunately successful.
12. Put them on an M.P. to overdo economy.
13. The beginning of Dora.
15. Mother Hubbard's cupboard was evidently one of these.
16. It's humiliating to the golfer to do the last after calling the first.
19. Suitable material for an angling yard-stick.
22. See 9.
23. Distress.
24. See 17 and 25.
26. See 9.
27. When a blackguard expires there are things for tea.
28. This game loses you a point at lawn tennis.

DOWN

1. Where many men start for the Underground.
2. Beer without an inn.
3. This river fought an American bay.
4. Cattish adjective for some twins.
5. Will's postscript.
6. Graduate possessed Abraham's town.
7. Deduction more legal than logical.
8. A speech in usual after-dinner style hides it.
14. The Air Service fly upside down over a meadow a long way off.
16. Kipling's boast in craft.
17. Ancient Oea 24 possession.
18. Obvious monopolies.
19. Put me on after the tide turns.
20. His subject may be chemical or psychological.
21. Once a hundred and fifty outside.
25. 24 town.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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